

# EURIPIDES

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
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IN FOUR VOLUMES

III

BACCHANALS  
MADNESS OF HERCULES  
CHILDREN OF HERCULES  
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS  
SUPPLIANTS



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# THE BACCHANALS



## ARGUMENT

*SEMELE the daughter of Cadmus, a mortal bride of Zeus, was persuaded by Hera to pray the God to promise her with an oath to grant her whatsoever she would. And, when he had consented, she asked that he would appear to her in all the splendour of his godhead, even as he visited Hera. Then Zeus, not of his will, but constrained by his oath, appeared to her amidst intolerable light and flashings of heaven's lightning, whereby her mortal body was consumed. But the God snatched her unborn babe from the flames, and hid him in a cleft of his thigh, till the days were accomplished wherein he should be born. And so the child Dionysus sprang from the thigh of Zeus, and was hidden from the jealous malice of Hera till he was grown. Then did he set forth in victorious march through all the earth, bestowing upon men the gift of the vine, and planting his worship everywhere. But the sisters of Semele scoffed at the story of the heavenly bridegroom, and mocked at the worship of Dionysus. And when Cadmus was now old, Pentheus his grandson reigned in his stead, and he too defied the Wine-giver, saying that he was no god, and that none in Thebes should ever worship him.*

*And herein is told how Dionysus came in human guise to Thebes, and filled her women with the Bacchanal possession, and how Pentheus, essaying to withstand him, was punished by strange and awful doom.*

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΩΝ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DIONYSUS, *the Wine-god, who is called also Bacchus, and  
Iacchus, and Bromius, the Clamour-king*

TEIRESIAS, *a prophet, old and blind*

CADMUS, *formerly king of Thebes*

PENTHEUS, *king of Thebes, grandson of Cadmus*

SERVANT of *Pentheus*

HERDMAN

MESSLNGER, *servant of Pentheus*

AGAVE, *mother of Pentheus, daughter of Cadmus*

CHORUS, *consisting of Bacchanals, Asiatic women who have  
followed Dionysus*

*Guards, attendants*

SCENE    *before the royal palace of Thebes*

## Β Α Κ Χ Α Ι

### ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

"Ἦκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα  
 Διόνυσος, ὃν τίκτει ποθ' ἡ Κάδμου κόρη  
 Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρῳ πυρί  
 μορφὴν δ' ἀμείψας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν  
 πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἴσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ  
 ὁρῶ δὲ μητρὸς μνήμα τῆς κεραυνίας  
 τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια  
 τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα,  
 ἀθάνατον Ἥρας μητέρ' εἰς ἐμὴν ὕβριν  
 10 αἰνῶ δὲ Κάδμον, ἄβατον ὃς πέδον τόδε  
 τίθησι, θυγατρὸς σηκόν· ἀμπέλου δέ νιν  
 πέριξ ἐγὼ κάλυφα βοτρυνώδει χλόη  
 λιπὼν δὲ Λυδῶν τοὺς πολυχρύσους γύας  
 Φρυγῶν τε, Περσῶν θ' ἡλιοβλήτους πλάκας  
 Βάκτριά τε τείχη τήν τε δύσχιμον χθόνα  
 Μῆδων ἐπελθὼν Ἀραβίαν τ' εὐδαίμονα  
 Ἀσίαν τε πᾶσαν, ἣ παρ' ἀλμυρὰν ἄλα  
 κεῖται μιγάσιν Ἑλλησι βαρβάροις θ' ὁμοῦ  
 20 πλήρεις ἔχουσα καλλιπυργώτους πόλεις,  
 εἰς τήνδε πρῶτον ἦλθον Ἑλλήνων πόλιν,  
 τὰκεῖ χορεύσας καὶ καταστήσας ἐμὰς  
 τελετάς, ἵν' εἶην ἐμφανῆς δαίμων βροτοῖς.  
 πρῶτας δὲ Θήβας τῆσδε γῆς Ἑλληνίδος

## THE BACCHANALS

*Enter* DIONYSUS

DIONYSUS

I to this land of Thebes have come, Zeus' Son  
Dionysus, born erstwhile of Cadmus' child  
Semele, brought by levin-brand to travail  
My shape from God to mortal semblance changed,  
I stand by Dirce's springs, Ismenus' flood  
I see my thunder-blasted mother's tomb  
Here nigh the halls the ruins of her home  
Smoulder with Zeus's flame that liveth yet—  
Hera's undying outrage on my mother  
Cadmus doth well, that he ordains this close,  
His child's grave, hallowed with the clustering  
green

Of vines I, even I, embowered it round

Leaving the gold-abounding Lydian meads  
And Phrygian, o'er the Peisian's sun-smit tracts,  
By Bactrian strongholds, Media's storm-swept land,  
Still pressing on, by Araby the Blest,  
And through all Asia, by the briny sea  
Lying with stately-towered cities thronged,  
Peopled with Hellenes blent with aliens,  
To this of Hellene cities first I come,  
Having established in far lands my dances  
And rites, to be God manifest to men  
So, of all Hellas, Thebes with my acclaim

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ' ἐξάψας χροδὸς  
 θύρσον τε δούς εἰς χεῖρα, κίσσινον βέλος·  
 ἐπεὶ μ' ἀδελφαὶ μητρός, ἃς ἤκιστ' ἐχρῆν,  
 Διόνυσον οὐκ ἔφασκον ἐκφῦναι Διός,  
 Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θνητοῦ τινος  
 εἰς Ζῆν' ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν λέχους,  
 30 Κάδμου σοφίσμαθ', ὦν νιν εἵνεκα κτανεῖν  
 Ζῆν' ἐξεκαυχώνθ', ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο  
 τοιγάρ νιν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων ᾤστρονσ' ἐγὼ  
 μαῖναις· ὅρος δ' οἰκοῦσι παράκοποι φρενῶν  
 σκευὴν τ' ἔχειν ἡνάγκασ' ὀργίων ἐμῶν,  
 καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὅσαι  
 γυναῖκες ἦσαν ἐξέμνηνα δωμάτων·  
 ὁμοῦ δὲ Κάδμου παισὶν ἀνάμεμιγμένοι  
 χλωραῖς ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀνορόφοις ἦνται πέτραις.  
 δεῖ γὰρ πόλιν τήνδ' ἐκμαθεῖν, κεῖ μὴ θέλει,  
 40 ἀτέλεστον οὖσαν τῶν ἐμῶν βακχευμάτων,  
 Σεμέλης τε μητρός ἀπολογῆσασθαί μ' ὑπερ  
 φανέντα θνητοῖς δαίμον', ὃν τίκτει Διί  
 Κάδμος μὲν οὖν γέρας τε καὶ τυραννίδα  
 Πενθεὶ δίδωσι θυγατρὸς ἐκπεφυκότι,  
 ὃς θεομαχεῖ τὰ κατ' ἐμέ καὶ σπονδῶν ἄπο  
 ὠθεῖ μ', ἐν εὐχαῖς τ' οὐδαμοῦ μνείαν ἔχει  
 ὦν εἵνεκ' αὐτῷ θεὸς γεγῶς ἐνδείξομαι  
 πᾶσιν τε Θηβαίοισιν. εἰς δ' ἄλλην χθόνα,  
 50 τὰνθένδε θέμενος εὖ, μεταστήσω πόδα,  
 δεικνὺς ἐμαυτόν· ἦν δὲ Θηβαίων πόλις  
 ὀργῇ σὺν ὄπλοις ἐξ ὅρους Βάκχας ἄγειν  
 ζητῇ, συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν.  
 ὦν εἵνεκ' εἶδος θνητὸν ἀλλάξας ἔχω  
 μορφήν τ' ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν.  
 ἀλλ', ὦ λιπούσαι Τμῶλον ἔρυμα Λυδίας,



## THE BACCHANALS

I first thrilled, there with fawn-skin girt her  
limbs,  
And gave her hand the ivied thyrsus-spear,  
Because my mother's sisters, to their shame,  
Proclaimed Dionysus never born of Zeus,  
But Semele by a man undone, said they,  
Charged upon Zeus her sin of wantonness—  
A subtle wile of Cadmus! Hence, they vaunted, 30  
Zeus slew the liar who named him paramour  
So frenzy-stung themselves I have driven from  
home,  
And mid the hills with soul distraught they dwell,  
The vesture of my revels forced to wear,  
And all the woman-seed of Cadmus' folk,  
Yea all, I drave forth saving from their homes  
And there, with Cadmus' daughters mingled, these  
'Neath green pines sit on crags all shelterless  
For this Thebes needs must learn, how loth soe'er,  
What means it not to be in my great rites 40  
Initiate, learn that I plead Semele's cause  
To men God manifest, whom she bare to Zeus  
Now Cadmus gave his crown and royal estate  
To Pentheus, of another daughter born,  
Who wars with Heaven in me, and from libations  
Thrusts, nor makes mention of me in his prayers  
Therefore to him my godhead will I prove,  
And to all Thebans To another land  
Then, after triumph here, will I depart,  
And manifest myself If Thebes in wrath 50  
Take arms to chase her Bacchantes from the hills,  
Leading my Maenads I will clash in fight  
For this cause have I taken mortal form,  
And changed my shape to fashion of a man  
Ho, ye who Lydia's rock-wall, Tmolus, left,

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

θίαςος ἐμός, γυναῖκες, ἅς ἐκ βαρβάρων  
 ἐκόμισα παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους ἐμοί,  
 αἶρεσθε τὰπιχώρι' ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν  
 τύμπανα, ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὐρήματα,  
 βασιλείά τ' ὑμφι δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε  
 κτυπεῖτε Πευθέως, ὥς ὀρᾷ Κάδμου πόλις  
 ἐγὼ δὲ Βάκχαις, εἰς Κιθαιρώνος πτυχὰς  
 ἐλθὼν, ἵν' εἰσί, συμμετασχίσω χορῶν

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ῥασίας ἀπὸ γαίας στρ. α'  
 ἱερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα θοάζω  
 Βρομίῳ πόνον ἡδὺν κάματόν τ' εὐ-  
 κάματον, Βάκχιον εὐαζομένα

τίς ὀδῶ τίς ὀδῶ τίς ἄντ. α'  
 μελάθροισι, ἔκτοπος ἔστω, στόμα τ' εὐφη-  
 μον ἅπας ἐξοσιούσθω τὰ νομισθέν-  
 τα γὰρ αἰὲ Διόνυσον ὑμνήσω

ὦ μάκαρ, ὅστις εὐδαίμων στρ. β'  
 τελετὰς θεῶν εἰδὼς  
 βιοτὰν ἀγιστεύει  
 καὶ θιασέεται ψυχάν,  
 ἐν ὄρεσσι βακχεύων  
 ὅσίοις καθαρμοῖσιν  
 τά τε ματρὸς μεγάλας ὄρ-  
 για Κυβέλας θεμιτεύων  
 ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσω  
 κισσῶ τε στεφανωθείς

## THE BACCHANALS

Women, my level-rout, from alien homes  
To share my rest and my wayfaring brought,  
Uplift the cymbals to the Phrygian towns  
Native, great Mother Rhea's device and mine,  
And smite them, compassing yon royal halls  
Of Pentheus, so that Cadmus' town may see  
I to Cithaeron's glens will go, where bide  
My Bacchanals, and join the dances there [Exit  
*Enter CHORUS, waving the thyrsus-wands, and clashing  
their timbrels*

### CHORUS

From Asian soil (Str 1)  
Far over the hallowed ridges of Tmolus fleeting,  
To the task that I love do I speed, to my painless  
toil [with greeting  
For the Clamour-king, hailing the Bacchanals' God  
(Ant 1)  
Who is there in the way? [one, sealing  
At his doors who is standing? Avoid!—and let each  
His lips from irreverence, hallow them Now, in  
the lay [pealing  
Dionysus ordains, will I chant him, his hymn out-

O happy to whom is the blessedness given (Str 2)  
To be taught in the Mysteries sent from heaven,  
Who is pure in his life, though whose soul the  
unsleeping  
Revel goes sweeping!  
Made meet by the sacred purifying  
For the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,  
For the orgies of Cybele mystery-folden,  
Of the Mother olden,  
Weathed with the ivy sprays,  
The thyrsus on high doth he raise,

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

Διόνυσον θεραπεύει  
 ἴτε Βάκχαι, ἴτε Βάκχαι,  
 Βρόμιον παῖδα θεὸν θεοῦ  
 Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι  
 Φρυγίων ἐξ ὁρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς  
 εὐρυχόρους ἀγυιάς, τὸν Βρόμιον·

90 ὃν ποτ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ὠδίνων  
 λοχίαις ἀνάγκαισι  
 πταμένας Διὸς βροντᾶς  
 νηδύος ἔκβολον μάτηρ  
 ἔτεκεν, λιποῦσ' αἰῶ-  
 να κεραυνία πλαγᾷ  
 λοχίοις δ' αὐτίκα νιν δέ-  
 ξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεὺς  
 κατὰ μηρῷ δὲ καλύψας  
 χρυσέαισιν συνερείδει  
 περόναις κρυπτὸν ἀφ' Ἥρας.  
 100 ἔτεκεν δ', ἀνίκα Μοῖραι  
 τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεὸν  
 στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων  
 στεφάνοις, ἔνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι  
 Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλονται πλοκάμοις.

ὦ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆ-  
 βαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσῷ  
 βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει  
 μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ  
 καὶ καταβακχιούσθε  
 110 δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι,  
 στικτῶν τ' ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων  
 στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων

## THE BACCHANALS

Singing the Vine-god's praise—

Come, Bacchanals, come !

The Clamour-king, child of a God,

O'er the mountains of Phrygia who trod,

Unto Hellas's highways broad

Bring him home, bring him home !—

(Ant 2)

The God whom his mother,—when anguish tore  
her

Of the travail resistless that deathward bore her

On the wings of the thunder of Zeus down-flying,— 90

Brought forth at her dying,

An untimely birth, as her spirit departed

Stricken from life by the flame down-darted

But in birth-bowers new did Zeus Cronion

Receive his scion ,

For, hid in a cleft of his thigh,

By the gold-clasps knit, did he lie

Safe hidden from Hera's eye

Till the Fates' day came ,

Then a God bull-horned Zeus bare, 100

And with serpents entwined his hair .

And for this do his Maenads wear

In their tresses the same

Thebes, nursing-town of Semele, crown (Str 3)

With the ivy thy brows, and be

All bloom, embowered in the starry-flowered

Lush green of the briony,

While the oak and pine thy tresses entwine

In thy bacchanal-ecstasy 110

And thy fawn-skin flecked, with a fringe be it  
decked

Of wool white-glistering

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

μαλλοῖς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς  
 ὀσιουῖσθ' αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει,  
 Βρόμιος εὖτ' ἂν ἄγῃ θιάσους  
 εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος, ἔνθα μένει  
 θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος  
 ἀφ' ἱστῶν παρὰ κερκίδων τ'  
 οἰστρηθεὶς Διόνυσῳ

- 120 ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-ἀντ γ'  
 των ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας  
 Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι,  
 ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις  
 βυρσότονον κύκλωμα  
 τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ἡῦρον  
 ἀνὰ δὲ βάκχια συντόνω  
 κέρασαν ἀδυβόα Φρυγίων  
 αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ῥέας εἰς  
 130 χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχᾶν  
 παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι  
 ματέρος ἐξανύσαντο θεᾶς,  
 εἰς δὲ χορεύματα  
 συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων,  
 αἷς χαίρει Διόνυσος

ἐπῳδ.

- ἡδὺς ἐν οὔρεσιν, εὖτ' ἂν  
 ἐκ θιάσων δρομαίων  
 πέσῃ πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων  
 ἱερὸν ἐνδυτόν, ἀγρεύων  
 140 αἷμα τραγοκτόνον, ὠμοφάγον χάριν,

## THE BACCHANALS

In silvery tassels,—O Bacchus' vassals,  
High-tossed let the wild wands swing!  
One dancing-band shall be all the land  
When, led by the Clamour-king,  
His revel-rout fills the hills—the hills  
Where thy women abide till he come  
Whom the Vine-god chasing, in frenzy racing,  
Hunted from shuttle and loom

(*Ant* 3)

O cavern that rang when Curetès sang, 120  
O bowel of the Babe Zeus' birth, [glancing  
Where the Corybants, dancing with helm-crests  
Through the dark halls under the earth,  
This timbrel found whose hide-stretched round  
We smite, and its Bacchanal mirth  
They blent with the cry ringing sweet and high  
From the flutes of the Phrygian land,  
And its thunder, soaring o'er revel-shouts' roaring,  
They gave unto Rhea's hand,  
But the gift passed on from the Mother, was won 130  
By the madding Satyr-band,  
And to Semele's child gave the woodfolk wild  
The homage he holdeth dear,  
When to feet white-flashing the timbrels clashing  
Are wedded in each third year

O trance of rapture, when, reeling aside (*Epode*)  
From the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains  
flying,

One sinks to the earth, and the fawn's flecked hide  
Covers him lying

With its sacred vesture, wherein he hath chased 140  
•The goat to the death for its blood—for the taste  
Of the feast raw-reeking, when over the hills

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἰέμενος εἰς ὄρεα Φρύγια, Λύδια,  
ὁ δ' ἑξαρχος Βρόμιος, εὐοῖ

ῥεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον, ῥεῖ δ' οἶνω, ῥεῖ δὲ με  
λίσσᾱν

νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὥς λιβάνου καπνός·

ὁ Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων

πυρσώδη φλόγα πεύκας

ἐκ νάρθηκος αἰσσει

δρόμῳ καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας

ἰαχαῖς τ' ἀναπάλλων,

150 τρυφερὸν πλόκαμον εἰς αἰθέρα ῥίπτων.

ἅμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει

τοιᾶδ' ὧ ἵτε Βάκχαι,

ὧ ἵτε Βάκχαι,

Τμώλου χρυσορόου χλιδά,

μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον

βαρυβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων,

εὖια τὸν εὖιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν

ἐν Φρυγίαισι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσί τε,

160 λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος

ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα

βρέμῃ, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν

εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος ἡδομένα δ' ἄρα,

πῶλος ὅπως ἅμα ματέρι φορβάδι,

κῶλον ἄγει ταχύπουν σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

170 τίς ἐν πύλαισι, Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων

Ἀγήνορος παῖδ', ὃς πόλιν Σιδωνίαν

λιπὼν ἐπύργωσ' ἄστνυ Θηβαίων τόδε.



## THE BACCHANALS

Of Phrygia, of Lydia, the wild feet haste, [thrills  
And the Clamour-king leads, and his "Evoe!"  
Our hearts replying!

Flowing with milk is the ground, and with wine is it  
flowing, and flowing [Araby soars,  
Nectar of bees, and a smoke as of incense of  
And the Bacchant, uplifting the flame of the brand  
of the pine ruddy-glowing,  
Waveth it wide, and with shouts, from the point of  
the wand as it pours, [and throwing  
Challengeth revellers straying, on-racing, on-dancing, 150  
Loose to the breezes his curls, while clear through  
the chorus that roars  
Cleaveth his shout,—“On, Bacchanal-rout,  
On, Bacchanal maidens, ye glory of Tmolus the hill  
gold-welling, [thunder-knelling,  
Blend the acclaim of your chant with the timbrels  
Glad-pealing the glad God's praises out  
With Phrygian cries and the voice of singing,  
When upsoareth the sound of the melody-  
fountain,  
Of the hallowed ringing of flutes far-finging 160  
The notes that chime with the feet that climb  
The pilgrim-path to the mountain!"  
And with rapture the Bacchanal onward racing,  
With gambollings fleet [grazing,  
As of foals round the mares in the meads that are  
Speedeth her feet

*Enter TEIRESIAS*

TEIRESIAS

Gate-warder, ho! call Cadmus forth the halls, 170  
Agenor's son, who came from Sidon-town,  
And with towers girded this the Thebans' burg.

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἴτω τις, εἰσάγγελλε Τειρεσίας ὅτι  
 ζητεῖ νιν οἶδε δ' αὐτὸς ὦν ἤκω πέρι,  
 ἃ τε ξυνεθέμην πρέσβυς ὦν γεραιτέρω,  
 θύρσους ἀνάπτειν καὶ νεβρῶν δορὰς ἔχειν  
 στεφανοῦν τε κρᾶτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν

### ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

180 ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς σὴν γῆρυν ἡσθόμην κλύων  
 σοφὴν σοφοῦ παρ' ἀνδρός, ἐν δόμοισιν ὦν  
 ἤκω δ' ἔτοιμος τήνδ' ἔχων σκευὴν θεοῦ  
 δεῖ γάρ νιν ὄντα παῖδα θυγατρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς,  
 Διόνυσον ὃς πέφηνεν ἀνθρώποις θεός,  
 ὅσον καθ' ἡμᾶς δυνατὸν αὔξεσθαι μέγαν  
 ποῖ δεῖ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα  
 καὶ κρᾶτα σείσαι πολιόν, ἐξηγοῦ σύ μοι  
 γέρων γέροντι, Τειρεσία· σὺ γὰρ σοφός  
 ὡς οὐ κάμοιμ' ἂν οὔτε νύκτ' οὔθ' ἡμέραν  
 θύρσῳ κροτῶν γῆν ἐπιλελήσμεθ' ἠδέως  
 γέροντες ὄντες

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

190 ταῦτ' ἐμοὶ πάσχεις ἄρα·  
 καὶ γὰρ ἡβῶ καὶ πιχειρήσω χοροῖς.

### ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκοῦν ὄχοισιν εἰς ὄρος περάσομεν ;

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἂν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι

### ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὁ θεὸς ἀμοχθὶ κεῖσε νῶν ἡγήσεται.

### ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν ,

## THE BACCHANALS

Go, one, say to him that Teiresias  
Seeks him—he knoweth for what cause I come,  
The old man's covenant with the elder-born  
To entwine the thyrsi and the fawnskin don,  
And crown our heads with wreaths of ivy-sprays

*Enter CADMUS*

CADMUS

Dear friend, within mine house I heard thy voice,  
And knew it, the wise utterance of the wise  
Ready I come, thus in the God's garb dight 180  
For him, who is my daughter's very son,  
Dionysus, who to men hath shown his godhead,  
Ought we with all our might to magnify  
Where shall we dance now, and where plant the foot,  
And toss the silvered head? Instruct thou me,  
Let eld guide eld, Teiresias wise art thou  
I shall not weary, nor by night nor day,  
Smiting on earth the thyrsus We forget  
In joy our age

TEIRESIAS

Thine heart is even as mine  
I too am young, I will essay the dance 190

CADMUS

Come, to the mountain fare we, chariot-borne

TEIRESIAS

Nay, riding should we honour less the God

CADMUS

Age ushering age, I will escort thee on

TEIRESIAS

We shall not tire; the God will lead us thither

CADMUS

Shall we alone of Thebes to Bacchus dance?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονούμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς

## ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἄλλ' ἐμῆς ἔχου χερὸς

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἰδοῦ, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.

## ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐ καταφρονῶ ἔγὼ τῶν θεῶν θνητὸς γεγώς

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

200 οὐδὲν σοφίζόμεσθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι  
πατρίους παραδοχὰς ἅς θ' ὁμήλικας χρόνῳ  
κεκτήμεθ', οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λόγος,  
οὐδ' εἰ δι' ἄκρων τὸ σοφὸν ἠῦρηται φρενῶν  
ἔρεῖ τις ὥς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχυνομαι,  
μέλλων χορεύειν κῶτα κισσώσας ἐμόν.  
οὐ γὰρ διήρηχ' ὁ θεὸς εἴτε τὸν νέον  
ἐχρῆν χορεύειν εἴτε τὸν γεραίτερον,  
ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν  
κοινὰς, δι' ἀριθμῶν δ' οὐδὲν αὔξεσθαι θέλει

## ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

210 ἐπεὶ σὺ φέγγος, Τειρεσία, τόδ' οὐχ ὀράς,  
ἐγὼ προφήτης σοι λόγων γενήσομαι  
Πενθεὺς πρὸς οἴκους ὅδε διὰ σπουδῆς περᾶ,  
Ἐχίονος παῖς, ᾧ κράτος δίδωμι γῆς  
ὥς ἐπτόχεται· τί ποτ' ἐρεῖ νεώτερον,

## ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἔκδημος ὦν μὲν τῇσδ' ἐτύγχανον χθονός,  
κλύω δὲ νεοχμὰ τήνδ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν κακά,  
γυναικάς ἡμῖν δώματ' ἐκλελοιπέναι  
πλασταῖσι βακχεῖαισιν, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις  
ὄρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα  
220 Διόνυσον, ὅστις ἔστι, τιμώσας χοροῖς·

## THE BACCHANALS

TEIRESIAS

Yea, we alone are wise, the rest be fools

CADMUS

Too long we linger    Come, grasp thou mine hand

TEIRESIAS

Lo there    clasp close the interlinking hand

CADMUS

Not I condemn the Gods, I, mortal-born !

TEIRESIAS

'Tis not for us to reason touching Gods 200  
Traditions of our fathers, old as time,  
We hold · no reasoning shall cast them down,—  
No, though of subtlest wit our wisdom spring  
Haply shall one say I respect not eld,  
Who ivy-crowned address me to the dance  
Nay, for distinction none the God hath made  
Whether the young or stricken in years must dance  
From all alike he claims his due of honour  
By halves he cares not to be magnified.

CADMUS

Since thou, Teiresias, seest not this light, 210  
I will for thee be spokesman of thy words  
Lo to these halls comes Pentheus hastily,  
Echion's son, to whom I gave the throne [tell ?  
How wild his mood ! What strange thing will he  
*Enter* PENTHEUS

PENTHEUS

It chanced that, sojourning without this land,  
I heard of strange misdeeds in this my town,  
How from their homes our women have gone forth  
Feigning a Bacchic rapture, and rove wild  
O'er wooded hills, in dances honouring  
Dionysus, this new God—whoe'er he be 220

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πλήρεις δὲ θιάσοις ἐν μέσοισιν ἐστάναι  
 κρατῆρας, ἄλλην δ' ἄλλοσ' εἰς ἐρημίαν  
 πτώσσουσαν εὐναῖς ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν,  
 πρόφασιν μὲν ὥς δὴ Μαινάδας θυοσκόους,  
 τὴν δ' Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ' ἄγειν τοῦ Βακχίου.  
 ὅσας μὲν οὖν εἴληφα, δεσμίους χέρας  
 σφάζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις  
 ὅσαι δ' ἄπεισιν, ἐξ ὅρους θηράσομαι,  
 230 Ἰνώ τ' Ἀγαύην θ' ἥ μ' ἔτικτ' Ἐχίονι,  
 Ἀκταίωνός τε μητέρ', Αὐτονόην λέγω.  
 καὶ σφᾶς σιδηραῖς ἀρμόσας ἐν ἄρκυσι  
 παύσω κακούργου τῆσδε Βακχείας τάχα  
 λέγουσι δ' ὥς τις εἰσελήλυθε ξένος  
 γόης ἐπώδὸς Λυδίας ἀπὸ χθονός,  
 ξανθοῖσι βοστρύχοισιν εὐοσμῶν κομῶν,  
 οἶνωπός, ὅσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων,  
 ὃς ἡμέρας τε κεῦφρόνας συγγίγνεται  
 τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίους νεάνισιν  
 εἰ δ' αὐτὸν εἴσω τῆσδε λήψομαι στέγης,  
 240 παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ἀνασεύοντά τε  
 κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμῶν  
 ἐκεῖνος εἶναί φησι Διόνυσον θεόν,  
 ἐκεῖνος ἐν μηρῷ ποτ' ἐρράφθαι Διός,  
 ὃς ἐκφυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίαις  
 σὺν μητρί, Δίους ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο  
 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ δεινῆς ἀγχόνης ἐπάξια,  
 ὕβρεις ὕβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος;

ἀτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον  
 ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὀρῶ  
 250 πατέρα τε μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς, πολὺν γέλωτ,  
 νό ἴηκε Βακχεύοντ' ἀναίνομαι, πατερ,

## THE BACCHANALS

'And midst each revel-rout the wine-bowls stand  
Brimmed . and to lonely nooks, some here, some  
there,  
They steal, to work with men the deed of  
shame,  
In pretext Maenad priestesses, forsooth,  
But honouring Aphrodite more than Bacchus  
As many as I have seized my servants keep  
Safe in the common prison manacled  
But those yet forth, will I hunt from the hills—  
Ino, Agave, who bare me to Echion,  
Autonoe withal, Actaeon's mother 230  
In toils of iron trapped, full soon shall they  
Cease from this pestilent Bacchic revelling  
Men say a stranger to the land hath come,  
A juggling sorcerer from Lydia-land,  
With essenced hair in golden tresses tossed,  
Wine-flushed, Love's witching graces in his eyes,  
Who with the damsels day and night consorts,  
Making pretence of Evian mysteries  
If I within these walls but prison him,  
Farewell to thyrsus-taboring, and to locks 240  
Free-tossed , for neck from shoulders will I hew  
*He saith that Dionysus is a God !*  
Saith, he was once sewn up in Zeus's thigh—  
Who, with his mother, was by lightning-flames  
Blasted, because she lied of Zeus's love  
Is not this worthy hanging's ruthless doom,  
Thus to blaspheme, whoe'er the stranger be ?

But lo, another marvel this—the seer  
Teiresias, in dappled fawnskins clad !  
Yea, and my mother's sire—O sight for laughter !— 250  
Tossing the reed-wand ! Father, I take shame

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

τὸ γῆρας ὑμῶν εἰσορῶν νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον.  
οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσόν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν  
θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ,  
σὺ ταῦτ' ἔπεισας, Τειρεσία· τόνδ' αὖ θέλεις  
τὸν δαίμον' ἀνθρώποισιν εἰσφέρων νέον  
σκοπεῖν πτερωτοὺς κάμπύρων μισθοὺς φέρειν·  
εἰ μὴ σε γῆρας πολλὸν ἐξερρύετο,  
καθῆσ' ἂν ἐν Βάκχαισι δέσμιος μέσαις,  
260 τελετὰς πονηρὰς εἰσάγων· γυναιξὶ γὰρ  
ὅπου βότρυος ἐν δαιτὶ γίγνεται γάνος,  
οὐχ ὑγιὲς οὐδὲν ἔτι λέγω τῶν ὀργίων

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῆς δυσσεβείας ὦ ξέν', οὐκ αἰδεῖ θεοὺς  
Κάδμον τε τὸν σπείραντα γηγενῇ στάχυν,  
'Ερχίονος δ' ὦν παῖς καταισχύνεις γένος·

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὅταν λάβῃ τις τῶν λόγων ἀνὴρ σοφὸς  
καλὰς ἀφορμάς, οὐ μέγ' ἔργον εὖ λέγειν  
σὺ δ' εὐτροχον μὲν γλῶσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις,  
270 ἐν τοῖς λόγοισι δ' οὐκ ἔνεισί σοι φρένες  
θρασὺς δέ, δυνατὸς καὶ λέγειν οἶός τ' ἀνὴρ,  
κακὸς πολίτης γίγνεται νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων  
οὗτος δ' ὁ δαίμων ὁ νέος ὃν σὺ διαγελᾷς,  
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μέγεθος ἐξειπεῖν ὅσος  
καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔσται δύο γάρ, ὦ νεανία,  
τὰ πρῶτ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισι Δημήτηρ θεά·  
γῆ δ' ἐστίν, ὄνομα δ' ὀπότερον βούλει κάλει  
αὕτη μὲν ἐν ξηροῖσιν ἐκτρέφει βροτούς·  
ὃς δ' ἦλθ' ἔπειτ', ἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος  
βότρυος ὑγρὸν πῶμ' ἠῦρε κείσῃνέγκατο  
280 θνητοῖς, ὃ παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτούς  
λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ῥοῆς,



## THE BACCHANALS

Beholding these grey hairs so sense-bereft  
Fling off the ivy, let the thyrsus fall,  
And set thine hand free, O my mother's sire  
Thou didst, Teiresias, draw him on to this  
'Tis thou wouldst foist this new God upon men  
For augury and divination's wage!  
Except thine hoary hairs protected thee,  
Thou shouldst amid the Bacchanals sit in chains,  
For bringing in these pestilent rites, for when 260  
In women's feasts the cluster's pride hath part,  
No good, say I, comes of their revelry

### CHORUS

Blasphemy!—Stranger, dost not reverence heaven,  
Nor Cadmus, sower of the earth-born seed?  
Son of Echion, thou dost shame thy birth!

### TEIRESIAS

Whene'er a wise man finds a noble theme  
For speech, 'tis easy to be eloquent  
Thou—roundly runs thy tongue, as thou wert wise,  
But in these words of thine sense is there none  
The rash man, armed with power and ready of speech, 270  
Is a bad citizen, as void of sense

But this new God, whom thou dost laugh to  
scorn,

I cannot speak the greatness whereunto  
In Hellas he shall rise Two chiefest Powers,  
Prince, among men there are divine Demeter—  
Earth is she, name her by which name thou wilt,—  
She upon dry food nurturieth mortal men  
Then followeth Semele's Son, to match her gift  
The cluster's flowing draught he found, and gave  
To mortals, which gives rest from grief to men 280  
Woe-woin, soon as the vine's stream filleth them

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὕπνον τε λήθην τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν κακῶν  
 δίδωσιν, οὐδ' ἔστ' ἄλλο φάρμακον πόνων  
 οὗτος θεοῖσι σπένδεται θεὸς γεγώς,  
 ὥστε διὰ τοῦτον τ' ἀγάθ' ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν  
 καὶ καταγελαῶς νιν, ὡς ἐνερράφη Διὸς  
 μηρῷ, διδάξω σ' ὡς καλῶς ἔχει τόδε.  
 ἐπεὶ νιν ἤρπασ' ἐκ πυρὸς κεραυνίου  
 290 Ζεὺς, εἰς δ' Ὀλυμπον βρέφος ἀνήγαγεν, θεὸν  
 Ἦρα νιν ἤθελ' ἐκβαλεῖν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ  
 Ζεὺς δ' ἀντεμηχανήσαθ' οἷα δὴ θεός.  
 ῥήξας μέρος τι τοῦ χθόν' ἐγκυκλουμένου  
 αἰθέρος, ἔθηκε τόνδ' ὄμηρον, ἐκδιδοὺς  
 Διόνυσον Ἦρας νεικέων χρόνῳ δέ νιν  
 βροτοὶ τραφῆναί φασιν ἐν μηρῷ Διός,  
 ὄνομα μεταστήσαντες, ὅτι θεᾶ θεὸς  
 Ἦρα ποθ' ὠμήρευσσε, συνθέντες λόγον  
 μάντις δ' ὁ δαίμων ὅδε· τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον  
 300 καὶ τὸ μανιῶδες μαντικὴν πολλὴν ἔχει  
 ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸ σῶμ' ἔλθῃ πολὺς,  
 λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμνηότας ποιεῖ  
 Ἄρεώς τε μοῖραν μεταλαβὼν ἔχει τινά·  
 στρατὸν γὰρ ἐν ὅπλοις ὄντα κἀπὶ τάξεσι  
 φόβος διεπτόησε πρὶν λόγχης θιγεῖν·  
 μανία δέ καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ Διονύσου πάρα  
 ἔτ' αὐτὸν ὄψει κἀπὶ Δελφίσι πέτραις  
 πηδῶντα σὺν πεύκαισι δικόρυφον πλάκα,  
 πάλλοντα καὶ σείοντα Βακχεῖον κλάδον,  
 μέγαν τ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδ'. ἀλλ' ἐμοί, Πενθεῦ, πιθοῦ·

## THE BACCHANALS

And sleep, the oblivion of our daily ills,  
He gives—there is none other balm for toils  
He is the Gods' libation, though a God,  
So that through him do men obtain good things

And dost thou mock him, as in Zeus's thigh  
Sewn? I will show thee all the legend's beauty.  
When Zeus had snatched him from the levin-fire,  
And bare the babe to Olympus, Heia then  
Fain would have cast his godhead out of heaven 290  
Zeus with a God's wit framed his counterplot  
A fragment from the earth-enfolding ether  
He brake, and wrought to a hostage,<sup>1</sup> setting so  
Dionysus safe from Hera's spite In time  
Men told how he was nursed in Zeus's thigh.  
Changing the name, they wrought a myth thereof,  
Because the God was hostage once to Hera

A prophet is this God the Bacchic frenzy  
And ecstasy are full-fraught with prophecy  
For, in his fullness when he floods our frame, 300  
He makes his maddened votaries tell the future  
Somewhat of Ares' dues he shares withal  
Hosts harness-clad, in ranks arrayed, sometimes  
Are thrilled with panic ere a spear be touched,  
This too is a frenzy Dionysus sends  
Yet shalt thou see him even on Delphi's crags  
With pine-brands leaping o'er the cloven crest,  
Tossing on high and waving Bacchus' bough,—  
Yea, great through Hellas Pentheus, heed thou  
me

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Gave this counterfeit Dionysus to Hera, as a hostage against his investing her rival's child with the honours of divinity. The argument is based on the similarity of μέρος, "fragment", μηρός, "thigh", θυμηρος, "hostage".

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- 310 μὴ τὸ κράτος αὔχει δύναμιν ἀνθρώποις ἔχειν,  
 μηδ', ἣν δοκῆς μέν, ἣ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῇ,  
 φρονεῖν δόκει τι τὸν θεὸν δ' εἰς γῆν δέχου  
 καὶ σπένδε καὶ βάκχευε καὶ στέφου κάρα.  
 οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει  
 γυναῖκας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει  
 τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ' αἰεῖ.  
 τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή· καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν  
 οὐσ' ἣ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφθαρῆσεται.  
 320 ὀρᾷς, σὺ χαίρεις, ὅταν ἐφεστῶσιν πύλαις  
 πολλοί, τὸ Πενθέως δ' ὄνομα μεγαλύνῃ πόλιν·  
 κακείνος, οἶμαι, τέρπεται τιμώμενος  
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ Κάδμος, ὃν συ διαγελαῖς,  
 κισσῷ τ' ἐρεψόμεσθα καὶ χορεύσομεν,  
 πολιά ξυνωρίς, ἀλλ' ὅμως χορευτέον,  
 κοῦ θεομαχῆσω σῶν λόγων πεισθεῖς ὑπο  
 μαίνει γὰρ ὡς ἄλγιστα, κοῦτε φαρμάκοις  
 ἄκη λάβοις ἄν, οὔτ' ἄνευ τούτων νοσεῖς

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, Φοῖβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύνεις λόγοις,  
 τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν

## ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

- 330 ὦ παῖ, καλῶς σοι Τειρεσίας παρήνευσεν·  
 οἶκει μεθ' ἡμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων  
 νῦν γὰρ πέτει τε καὶ φρονῶν οὐδὲν φρονεῖς  
 κεῖ μὴ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς οὗτος, ὡς σὺ φῆς,  
 παρὰ σοὶ λεγέσθω καὶ καταψεύδου καλῶς  
 ὡς ἔστι, Σεμέλη θ' ἵνα δοκῇ θεὸν τεκεῖν,  
 ἡμῖν τε τιμὴ παντὶ τῷ γένει προσῇ,  
 ὀρᾷς τὸν Ἀκταίωνος ἄθλιον μόρον,  
 ὃν ὠμόσιτοι σκύλακες ἄς ἐθρέψατο  
 διεσπάσαντο, κρείσσον' ἐν κυναγίαις

## THE BACCHANALS

Boast not that naked force hath power o'er men ,      310  
Nor, if it seem so to thy jaundiced eye,  
Deem thyself wise    The God into thy land  
Welcome · spill wine, be bacchant, wreath thine head

Dionysus upon women will not thrust  
Chastity · in true womanhood inborn  
Dwells temperance touching all things evermore  
This must thou heed , for in his Bacchic rites  
The virtuous-hearted shall not be undone

Lo, thou art glad when thousands throng thy gates,  
And all Thebes magnifieth Pentheus' name      320  
He too, I wot, in homage taketh joy  
I, then, and Cadmus, whom thou laugh'st to scorn,  
Will wreath our heads with ivy, and will dance—  
A greybeard pair, yet cannot we but dance  
Not at thy suasion will I wai with Gods  
Most grievous is thy madness, and no spell  
May medicine thee, though spells have made thee mad.

### CHORUS

Old sire, thou sham'st not Phoebus in thy speech,  
And wisely honourest Bromius, mighty God

### CADMUS

My son, well hath Teiresias counselled thee      330  
Dwell with us, not without the pale of wont  
Thou'rt now in cloudland    naught thy wisdom is  
For, though this God were no God,—as thou sayest,—  
God be he called of thee    in glorious fraud  
Be Semele famed as mother of a God  
So upon all our house shall honour rest

Rememberest thou Actaeon's wretched doom,  
• Whom the raw-ravening hounds himself had reared  
Rent limb from limb in the meads, for that high boast

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

340 Ἄρτεμιδος εἶναι κομπάσαντ', ἐν ὀργάσιν  
δὲ μὴ πάθης σύ, δευρό σου στέψω κάρα  
κισσῷ μεθ' ἡμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμὴν δίδου

## ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα, βακχεύσεις δ' ἰών,  
μηδ' ἐξομόρξει μωρίαν τὴν σὴν ἐμοί ;  
τῆς σῆς δ' ἀνοίας τόνδε τὸν διδάσκαλον  
δίκην μέτειμι στειχέτω τις ὡς τάχος,  
ἐλθὼν δὲ θάκουσ τοῦδ' ἵν' οἶωνοσκοπῇ  
μοχλοῖς τριαίνου κἄνἀτρεψον ἔμπαλιν,  
350 ἄνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγχέας ὁμοῦ,  
καὶ στέμματ' ἀνέμοις καὶ θυέλλαισιν μέθες  
μάλιστα γάρ νιν δῆξομαι δράσας τάδε  
οἱ δ' ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἐξιχνεύσατε  
τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον, ὃς εἰσφέρει νόσον  
καινὴν γυναιξὶ καὶ λέχῃ λυμαίνεται  
κἄνπερ λάβητε, δέσμιον πορεύσατε  
δευρ' αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν λευσίμου δίκης τυχῶν  
θάνῃ πικρὰν βάκχευσιν ἐν Θήβαις ἰδῶν

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὦ σχέτλι', ὡς οὐκ οἶσθα ποῦ ποτ' εἰ λόγων  
μέμνηας ἤδη, καὶ πρὶν ἐξέστης φρενῶν  
360 στείχωμεν ἡμεῖς, Κάδμε, κάξαιτώμεθα  
ὑπὲρ τε τούτου καίπερ ὄντος ἀγρίου  
ὑπὲρ τε πόλεως, τὸν θεὸν μηδὲν νέον  
δρᾶν. ἀλλ' ἔπου μοι κισσίνου βάκτρον μέτα·  
πειρῶ δ' ἀνορθοῦν σῶμ' ἐμόν, κάγῳ τὸ σόν·  
γέροντε δ' αἰσχρὸν δύο πεσεῖν· ἴτω δ' ὅμως·  
τῷ Βακχίῳ γὰρ τῷ Διὸς δουλευτέον  
Πενθεὺς δ' ὅπως μὴ πένθος εἰσοίσει δόμοις  
τοῖς σοῖσι, Κάδμε μαντικῇ μὲν οὐ λέγω,  
τοῖς πράγμασιν δέ· μῶρα γὰρ μῶρος λέγει.

## THE BACCHANALS

That Artemis in hunting he excelled ? 340  
 Lest such be thy fate, let me crown thine head  
 With ivy honour thou with us the God

### PENTHEUS

Hence with thine hand ! Go, play the Bacchant  
 thou,  
 Neither besmirch me with thy folly's stain  
 This seer, thy monitor in senselessness,  
 Will I chastise Let someone go with speed—  
 (*To an attendant*) Thou, hie thee to his seat of augury,  
 Upheave with levers, hurl it to the ground,  
 All in confusion turn it upside down,  
 His holy fillets fling to wind and storm 350  
 For, doing so, I most shall wring his heart  
 Some—ye, range through the city, and track down  
 That gul-faced stranger, who upon our wives  
 Bringeth strange madness, and defiles our beds  
 And if ye catch him, hale him bound with chains  
 Hither, that death by stoning be his meed,  
 And so he rue his revelry in Thebes

### TEIRESIAS

Ah wretch, thou knowest not what thou hast said !  
 Thou'rt stark-mad now, who erst wast sense-bereft  
 Let us go, Cadmus, and make intercession 360  
 Both for this man, brute savage though he be,  
 And Thebes, that no strange vengeance of the God  
 Smite them Come with me, ivy-wand in hand,  
 Essay to upbear my frame, as I do thine  
 Shame if two greybeards fell !—nay, what of that ?  
 For Bacchus, Son of Zeus, we needs must serve  
 Cadmus, beware lest *Pentheus* bring his echo,  
*Repentance*, to thine house —not prophecy here  
 Speaks, but his deeds A fool, he speaketh folly  
[*Exeunt*

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

370

Ὅσια πότνα θεῶν,  
Ὅσια δ' ἂ κατὰ γᾶν  
χρυσέαν πτέρυγα φέρεις,  
τάδε Πενθέως αἰεὶς,  
αἰεὶς οὐχ ὅσιαν  
ὔβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον,  
τὸν Σεμέλας, τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις  
εὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρῶ-  
τον μακάρων, ὃς τὰδ' ἔχει,  
θιασεύειν τε χοροῖς  
μετὰ τ' αὐλοῦ γελάσαι  
ἀποπαῦσαι τε μερίμνας,  
ὁπότεν βότρυος ἔλθῃ  
γάνος ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν,  
κισσοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλίαις  
ἀνδράσι κρατῆρ ὕπνον ἀμφιβάλλῃ

στρ α'

380

390

ἀχαλίνων στομάτων  
ἀνόμου τ' ἀφροσύνας  
τὸ τέλος δυστυχία  
ὃ δὲ τᾶς ἡσυχίας  
βίотος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν  
ἀσάλευτόν τε μένει  
καὶ συνέχει δώματα πόρσω γὰρ ὅμως  
αἰθέρα ναῖοντες ὀρώ-  
σιν τὰ βροτῶν οὐρανίδαι.  
τὸ σοφὸν δ' οὐ σοφία  
τό τε μὴ θνητὰ φρονεῖν  
βραχύς αἰὼν ἐπὶ τούτῳ  
δέ τις ἂν μεγάλα διώκων  
τὰ παρόντ' οὐχὶ φέροι

ἀντ α'



## THE BACCHANALS

### CHORUS

O Sanctity, thou who dost bear dominion (Stn 1) 370  
Over Gods, yet low as this earthly ground,  
Unto usward, stoopest thy golden pinion,—

Hear'st thou the words of the king, and the sound  
Of his blast of defiance, of Pentheus assailing  
The Clamour-king?—hear'st thou his blasphemous  
railing

On Semele's son, who is foremost found  
Of the Blest in the festival beauty-crowned?—  
Who hath for his own prerogative taken  
To summon forth feet through his dances to  
leap,

When blent with the flutes light laughs awaken, 380  
And the children of care have forgotten to weep,  
Whosoever revealed is the cluster's splendour  
In the banquet that men to the high Gods tender,  
And o'er ivy-wreathed revellers drinking deep  
The wine-bowl droppeth the mantle of sleep

Of the reinsless lips that will own no master, (Ant 1)

Of the folly o'er law's pale stubborn to stay—  
One is the end of them, even disaster,  
But the calm life, still as a summer day,  
But the foot whose faring discretion guideth, 390  
Their steadfast state unshaken abideth,

And the home still findeth in such its stay  
Ah, the Heavenly Ones dwell far away,  
Yet look they on men from their cloudy portals

O, not with knowledge is Wisdom bought,  
And the spirit that soareth too high for mortals  
Shall see few days. whosoever hath caught  
At the things too great for a man's attaining,  
Even blessings assured shall he lose in the gaming

## BAKXAI

400

μαινομενων δ' οἶδε τρόποι  
καὶ κακοβούλων παρ' ἔμοιγε φωτῶν.

ἰκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον,  
 νῆσον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας,  
 ἐν ᾗ θελξίφρονες νέμονται  
 θνατοῖσιν Ἑρωτες,  
 χθόνα<sup>1</sup> θ' ἂν ἐκατόστομοι  
 βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ  
 καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβρον  
 ποῦ δ' ἃ καλλιστευομένα

στρ. β'

410

Πιερίᾱ μούσειος ἔδρᾱ,  
σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὀλύμπου,  
ἐκεῖσ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε,  
πρόβακχ' εὖνι δαῖμον  
ἐκεῖ Χάριτες, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος  
ἐκεῖ δὲ Βάκχαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν

ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παῖς  
χαίρει μὲν θαλίσαισιν,  
φιλεῖ δ' ὀλβοδότειραν Εἰ-  
ρήνην, κουροτρόφον θεάν.  
ἴσα δ' εἰς τε τὸν ὄλβιον  
τόν τε χείρονα δῶκ' ἔχειν  
οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον  
μισεῖ δ' ὃ μὴ ταῦτα μέλει  
κατὰ φάος νύκτας τε φίλα  
εὐαίωνα διαζῆν·

ἀντ. β'

420

σοφὸν δ' ἀπέχειν πρᾶπίδα φρένα τε

<sup>1</sup> Meineke and Nauck for MSS *πάφον*

## THE BACCHANALS

400

Such paths as this, meseemeth, be sought  
Of the witless folly that loves distraught

(*Str* 2)

O to flee hence unto where Aphrodite  
Doth in Cyprus, the paradise-island, dwell,  
The sea-ringed haunt of the Love-gods mighty  
To weave the soul-enchanting spell,  
Or the fields where untold is the harvest's gold,  
Where the stream of the hundred mouths hath  
rolled,

Whereon rain never fell<sup>1</sup>

But O for the land that in beauty is peerless,<sup>1</sup>  
The Pierian haunt where the Muses sing<sup>1</sup> 410  
On Olympus the hallowed to stand all fearless  
Thitherward lead me, O Clamour-king<sup>1</sup>  
O Revel-god, guide where the Graces abide  
And Desire,—where danceth, of no man denied,  
The Bacchanal king

(*Ant* 2)

Our God, the begotten of Zeus, hath pleasure  
In the glee of the feast where his chalices  
shine,  
And Peace doth he love, who is giver of treasure,  
Who of Youth is the nursing-mother divine 420  
On the high, on the low, doth his bounty bestow  
The joyance that maketh an end of woe,

The joyance of wine

But he hateth the man that in scorn refuseth  
A life that on pinions of happiness flies  
Through its days and its nights, nor the good part  
chooseth

• Wisely shalt thou from the over-wise

<sup>1</sup> Macedonia, where Euripides composed this play

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

430 περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν  
τὸ πλήθος ὃ τι τὸ φαυλότερον  
ἐνόμισε χρήταί τε, τόδ' αὖν δεχοίμαν

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Πενθεῦ, πάρεσμεν τήνδ' ἄγραν ἡγρευκότες  
ἐφ' ἣν ἔπεμψας, οὐδ' ἄκρανθ' ὥρμήσαμεν  
ὁ θήρ δ' ὅδ' ἡμῖν πρᾶος οὐδ' ὑπέσπασε  
φυγῇ πόδ', ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν οὐκ ἄκων χέρας,  
οὐδ' ὠχρός, οὐδ' ἥλλαξεν οἰνωπὸν γένυν,  
440 γελῶν δὲ καὶ δεῖν καπάργειν ἐφίλετο  
ἔμενέ τε, τοῦμόν εὐπετές ποιούμενος.  
κἀγὼ δι' αἰδοῦς εἶπον ὦ ξέν', οὐχ ἑκὼν  
ἄγω σε, Πενθέως δ' ὅς μ' ἔπεμψ' ἐπιστολαῖς  
ἅς δ' αὖ σὺ Βάκχας εἰρξας, ἅς συνήρπασας  
κᾶδησας ἐν δεσμοῖσι πανδήμου στέγης,  
φροῦδαί γ' ἐκείναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὀργάδας  
σκιρτῶσι Βρόμιον ἀνακαλούμεναι θεόν  
αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη πεδῶν,  
κλῆδές τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θνητῆς χερὸς  
πολλῶν δ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ θαυμάτων ἦκει πλέως  
450 εἰς τάσδε Θήβας σοὶ δὲ τᾶλλα χρή μέλειν.

## ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

μαίνεσθε· χειρῶν τοῦδ' ἐν ἄρκυσιν γὰρ ὦν  
οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ὠκὺς ὥστε μ' ἐκφυγεῖν  
ἀτὰρ τὸ μὲν σῶμ' οὐκ ἄμορφος εἶ, ξένε,  
ὥς εἰς γυναῖκας, ἐφ' ὅπερ εἰς Θήβας πάρει  
πλόκαμός τε γάρ σου ταναός, οὐ πάλης ὑπο,  
γένυν παρ' αὐτὴν κεχυμένος, πόθου πλέως·  
λευκὴν δὲ χροιάν ἐκ παρασκευῆς ἔχεις,  
οὐχ ἡλίου βολαῖσιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ σκιᾶς,  
τὴν Ἀφροδίτην καλλονῇ θηρώμενος.  
460 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι λέξον ὅστις εἶ γένος.

## THE BACCHANALS

Hold thee apart but the faith of the heart 430  
Of the people, that lives in the works of the mart,  
For me shall suffice.

*Re-enter* PENTHEUS *Enter* SERVANT, *with attendants,*  
*bringing* DIONYSUS *bound*

### SERVANT

Pentheus, we come, who have run down this prey  
For which thou sentest us, nor sped in vain  
This wild-beast found we tame he darted not  
In flight away, but yielded, nothing loth,  
His hands, nor paled, nor changed his cheeks' rose-hue,  
But smiling bade us bind and lead him thence,  
And tarried, making easy this my task 440  
Then shamed I said, "Not, stranger, of my will,  
But by commands of Pentheus, lead I thee"  
The captured Bacchanals thou didst put in ward,  
And in the common prison bind with chains,  
Fled to the meadows are they, loosed from bonds,  
And dance and call on Bromius the God  
The fetters from their feet self-sundered fell,  
Doors, without mortal hand, unbarred themselves  
Yea, fraught with many marvels this man came  
To Thebes ! To thee the rest doth appertain 450

### PENTHEUS

Ye are mad ! Once in the toils of these mine hands,  
He is not so fleet as to escape from me  
Ha ! of thy form thou art not ill-favoured, stranger,  
For woman's tempting—even thy quest at Thebes  
No wrestler thou, as show thy flowing locks  
Down thy cheeks floating, fraught with all desire,  
And white, from heedful tendance, is thy skin,  
Smit by no sun-shafts, but made wan by shade,  
While thou dost hunt desire with beauty's lure  
First, tell me of what nation sprung thou art 460

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐ κόμπος οὐδέις· ῥάδιον δ' εἰπεῖν τόδε.  
τὸν ἀνθεμῶδη Τμῶλον οἴσθ' ἀπὸ κλύων.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἶδ', ὃς τὸ Σάρδεων ἄστυ περιβάλλει κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐντεῦθεν εἰμι, Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν δὲ τελετὰς τάσδ' ἄγεις ἐς Ἑλλάδα ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

Διώνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησ', ὁ τοῦ Διός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

Ζεὺς δ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖ τις, ὃς νέους τίκτει θεούς ,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότ' ἐρ' ἐν νύκτωρ σ' ἦ κατ' ὄμμ' ἠνάγκασεν ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

470 ὁρῶν ὁρῶντα, καὶ δίδωσιν ὄργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὰ δ' ὄργι' ἐστὶ τίν' ἰδέαν ἔχοντά σοι ,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄρρητ' ἀβακχεύτοισιν εἰδέναι βροτῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔχει δ' ὄνησιν τοῖσι θύουσιν τίνα,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐ θέμις ἀκούσαί σ', ἔστι δ' ἄξι' εἰδέναι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὖ τοῦτ' ἐκὶ βδὴλευσας, ἵν' ἀκούσαι θέλω

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀσέβειαν ἀσκοῦντ' ὄργι' ἐχθαίρει θεοῦ

## THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

No high vaunt this—'tis easy to declare  
Of flowery Træolus haply thou hast heard

PENTHEUS

I know it compasseth the Saidians' town

DIONYSUS

Thence am I Lydia is my fatherland.

PENTHEUS

Wherefore to Hellas bringest thou these rites?

DIONYSUS

Dionysus, Zeus' son, made me initiate

PENTHEUS

Lives a Zeus there, who doth beget new gods?

DIONYSUS

Nay, the same Zeus who wedded Semele here

PENTHEUS

Dreaming or waking wast thou made his thiall?

DIONYSUS

Nay, eye to eye his mysteries he bestowed

470

PENTHEUS

Ay, of what fashion be these mysteries?

DIONYSUS

'Tis secret, save to the initiate

PENTHEUS

What profit bring they to his votaries?

DIONYSUS

Thou mayst not hear . yet are they worth thy knowing

PENTHEUS

Shrewd counterfeitng, to whet lust to hear!

\*

DIONYSUS

His rites loathe him that worketh godlessness,

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸν θεὸν ὁρᾶν γὰρ φῆς σαφῶς, ποιός τις ἦν,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὁποῖος ἤθελ'· οὐκ ἐγὼ ἴτασσον τόδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὖ κοῦδέν λέγων

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

480 δόξει τις ἀμαθεῖ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦλθες δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαίμονα ,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὄργια

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

φρονούσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολὺ.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τάδ' εὖ γε μᾶλλον οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τά δ' ἱερὰ νύκτωρ ἢ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς ,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

νύκτωρ τὰ πολλὰ σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' εἰς γυναικας δόλιόν ἐστι καὶ σαθρόν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

κἂν ἡμέρα τό γ' αἰσχροὺς ἐξεύροι τις ἄν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

490 σὲ δ' ἀμαθίας γε κάσεβούντ' εἰς τὸν θεόν

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὥς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κοῦκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

εἴφ' ὅ τι παθεῖν δεῖ τί με τὸ δεινὸν ἐργάσει;



## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thou saw'st the God · what fashion was he of ?

DIONYSUS

As seemed him good that did not I enjoin

PENTHEUS

This too thou hast shrewdly parried, telling naught

DIONYSUS

Wise answers seem but folly to a fool 480

PENTHEUS

Can'st thou the first to bring his godhead hither ?

DIONYSUS

All Asians through these mystic dances tread

PENTHEUS

Ay, far less wise be they than Hellene men

DIONYSUS

Herein far wiser Diverse wont is theirs

PENTHEUS

By night or day dost thou perform his rites ?

DIONYSUS

Chiefly by night : gloom lends solemnity

PENTHEUS

Ay—and for women snares of lewdness too

DIONYSUS

In the day too may lewdness be devised

PENTHEUS

Now punished must thy vile evasions be

DIONYSUS

Ay, and thy folly and impiety 490

PENTHEUS

How bold our Bacchant is, in word-fence skilled !

DIONYSUS

What is my doom ? What vengeance wilt thou wreak ?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἄβρὸν βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἱερὸς ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ' αὐτὸν τρέφω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔπειτα θύρσον τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χεροῖν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

αὐτός μ' ἀφαιροῦ· τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εἶρκταιῖσί τ' ἔνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

λύσει μ' ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὅταν γε καλέσης αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθείς

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

500

καὶ νῦν ἂ πάσχω πλησίον παρὼν ὄρᾳ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ ποῦ ᾽στιν, οὐ γὰρ φανερὸς ὄμμασίν γ' ἐμοῖς

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

παρ' ἐμοί· σὺ δ' ἄσεβής αὐτὸς ὦν οὐκ εἰσορᾷς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λάζυσθε καταφρονεῖ με καὶ Θήβας ὅδε

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν σωφρονῶν οὐ σώφροσιν

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅ τι ζῆς, οὐδ' ὅ δρᾷς, οὐδ' ὅστις εἶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

Πενθεὺς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατὴρ δ' Ἐχίονος

## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thy dainty tresses first will I cut off

DIONYSUS

Hallowed my locks are, fostered for the God

PENTHEUS

Next, yield me up this thyrsus from thine hands

DIONYSUS

Take it thyself 'Tis Dionysus' wand

PENTHEUS

Thy body in my dungeon will I wail

DIONYSUS

The God's self shall release me, when I will

PENTHEUS

Ay—when mid Bacchanals thou call'st on him<sup>1</sup>

DIONYSUS

Yea, he is now near, marking this despite 300

PENTHEUS

Ay, where?—not unto mine eyes manifest

DIONYSUS

Beside me Thou, the impious, seest him not

PENTHEUS

Seize him! This fellow mocketh me and Thebes

DIONYSUS

I warn ye, bind not!—Reason's rede to folly

PENTHEUS

I bid them bind, who have better right than thou

DIONYSUS

Thy life nor acts thou know'st, nor what thou art

PENTHEUS

Pentheus—Agave's and Echion's son

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Never, for you shall not escape to rejoin them

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐνδυστυχήσαι τούνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἶ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

510

χώρει καθείρξατ' αὐτὸν ἱππικαῖς πέλας  
φάτναισιν, ὥς ἂν σκότιον εἰσορᾷ κνέφας.

• ἐκεῖ χόρευε τάσδε δ' αἶς ἄγων πάρει  
κακῶν συνεργοὺς ἢ διεμπολήσομεν  
ἢ χεῖρα δούπου τούδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου  
παύσας, ἐφ' ἱστοῖς δμωίδας κεκτήσομαι

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ὃ τι γὰρ μὴ χρεῶν, οὔτοι χρεῶν  
παθεῖν ἀτάρ τοι τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ὕβρισμάτων  
μέτεισι Διόνυσός σ', ὃν οὐκ εἶναι λέγεις  
ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἀδικῶν κείνον εἰς δεσμοὺς ἄγεις

ΧΟΡΟΣ

520

Ἀχελῷου θύγατερ,  
πότνι' εὐπάρθενε Δίρκα,  
σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς  
τὸ Διὸς βρέφος ἔλαβες,  
ὅτε μῆρῳ πυρὸς ἐξ ἀ-  
θανάτου Ζεὺς ὁ τεκὼν ἦρ-  
πασέ νιν, τὰδ' ἀναβοάσας  
ἴθι, Διθύραμβ', ἐμὰν ἄρ-  
σενά τάνδε βᾶθι νηδύν  
ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ὦ Βάκ-  
χιε, Θήβαις ὀνομάζειν.

στρ

530

σὺ δέ μ', ὦ μάκαιρα Δίρκα,  
στεφανηφόρους ὑπῳθεῖ  
θιάσους ἔχουσιν ἐν σοί  
τί μ' ἀναίνει, τί με φεύγεις,

## THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Yea, fitly named to be in misery pent

PENTHEUS

Away! Enjail him in the horses' stalls  
Hard by, that he may see but murky gloom [thee, 510  
There dance! These women thou hast brought with  
Thy crimes' co-workers, I will sell for slaves,  
O! make my weaving-damsels, and so hush  
Then hands from cymbal-clang and smitten drum

DIONYSUS

I go The fate that Fate forbids can ne'er  
Touch me On thee Dionysus shall requite  
These insults—he whose being thou hast denied  
Outraging me, thou halest him to bonds  
[*Exeunt* DIONYSUS guarded, and PENTHEUS

CHORUS

All hail, Achelous' Daughter,<sup>1</sup> (Sti)  
Dirce the maiden, majestic and blest!—in thy cool-  
welling water 520  
Thou receivedst in old time the offspring of Zeus  
'neath thy silvery plashing,  
When Zeus, who begat him, had snatched from the  
levin unquenchably flashing, [the Father cry,  
And sealed up the babe in his thigh, and aloud did  
“Come! into this, Dithyrambus, the womb of no  
mother, pass thou —  
By this name unto Thebes I proclaim thee, O God  
of the Bacchanals, now”  
Ah Dirce, thou thrustest me hence, when I bring  
thee the glorious vision 530  
Of his garlanded revels!—now why am I scouted,  
disowned, and abhorred?

<sup>1</sup> The river Achelous was in legend the Father of all Greek streams Dirce was the sacred fountain of Thebes.

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἔτι ναὶ τὰν βοτρυνώδη  
Διονύσου χάριν οἶνας  
ἔτι σοι τοῦ Βρομίου μελήσει

[οἶαν οἶαν ὀργάν]

ἀντ.

ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον  
γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντός  
540 ποτε Πενθεύς, δν Ἐχίων  
ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,  
ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶ-  
τα βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὥσ-  
τε γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς  
ὃς ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ  
Βρομίου τάχα ξυνάψει,  
τὸν ἐμὸν δ' ἐντὸς ἔχει δώ-  
ματος ἤδη θιασώταν  
550 σκοτίαισι κρυπτὸν ἐν εἵρκταις,  
ἐσορᾷς τάδ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ  
Διόνυσε, σοὺς προφήτας  
ἐν ἀμίλλαισιν ἀνάγκας,  
μόλε, χρυσῶπα τινάσσω,  
ἄνα, θύρσον κατ' Ὀλύμπου,  
φονίου δ' ἀνδρὸς ὕβριν κατάσχεσ

πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τὰς θη-

ἐπωδ.

ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς  
θιάσους, ὦ Διόνυσ', ἡ  
κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις,  
560 τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρεσ-  
σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἐν-  
θα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων  
σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,  
σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώτας.

## THE BACCHANALS

Yet there cometh—I swear by the full-clustered  
 grace of the vine Dionysian—  
 An hour when thine heart shall accept Dionysus,  
 shall hail him thy lord

Lo, his earth-born lineage bewrayeth (*Ant*)  
 Pentheus, the taint of the blood of the dragon of  
 old he betrayeth,  
 The serpent that came of the seed of the earth-  
 born Titan Echion [mortal's scion, 540  
 It hath made him a grim-visaged monster, and not as a  
 But as that fell giant brood that in strife with  
 immortals stood  
 He is minded to fetter me, Bromius' handmaid,  
 with cords straightway [revel this day,  
 He hath poisoned his palace within my companion in  
 Dungeoned in gloom ' Son of Zeus, are his deeds  
 of thine eye un beholden, 550  
 Dionysus?—thy prophets with tyranny wrestling in  
 struggle and strain?  
 Sweep down the slope of Olympus, uptossing thy  
 thyrsus golden [reftain  
 Come to us, King, and the murderer's insolent fury  
 (*Epode*)  
 Ah, where dost thou linger on Nysa the mother of  
 beasts of the world,  
 Waving thy revellers on with thy wand, or where  
 heavenward soar [fold  
 Crests of Corycia, or haply where far forest-solitudes 560  
 Round the flanks of Olympus, where Orpheus con-  
 strained by his minstrelsy-lore  
 Trees round him adoring to press, and the beasts  
 of the wilderness,  
 As he harped of yore?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

570 μάκαρ ὦ Πιερία,  
σέβεταιί σ' Εὖιος, ἥξει  
τε χορεύσων ἅμα βακχεύ-  
μασι, τόν τ' ὠκυρόαν  
διαβὰς Ἀξιὸν εἰλίσ-  
σομένας Μαινάδας ἄξει,  
Λυδίαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας  
βροτοῖς ὀλβοδόταν  
πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυον  
εὐιππον χώραν ὕδασιν  
καλλίστοισι λιπαίνειν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἰώ,  
κλύετ' ἐμᾶς κλύετ' αὐδᾶς,  
ἰὼ Βάκχαι, ἰὼ Βάκχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ὄδε, τίς πόθεν ὁ κέλαδος ἀνά μ' ἐκάλεσεν  
Εὐίου,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

580 ἰὼ ἰώ, πάλιν αὐδῶ,  
ὁ Σεμέλας, ὁ Διὸς παῖς

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ δέσποτα δέσποτα,  
μόλε νυν ἡμέτερον εἰς  
θίασον, ὦ Βρόμιε Βρόμιε

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

σεῖτε πέδον χθονὸς ἔνοσι πότνια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾶ ᾶ,  
τάχα τὰ Πενθέως  
μέλαθρα διατινάσσεται πεσήμασιν.



## THE BACCHANALS

Thrice blessed Pieria-land,  
Evius honouresth thee!—lo, he cometh, he cometh,  
on-leading

His dances with Bacchanal chants, over Axius' flood  
swift-speeding

He shall pass, he shall marshal the leaping feet in  
the dance-rings sweeping,

The feet of his Maenad-band

570

On shall he haste over Lydias the river,  
O'er the father of streams, the blessing-giver,  
Whose waters fair, as the tale hath told,  
O'er the land of the gallant war-steed rolled,  
Spread fatness on every hand

DIONYSUS (*within*)

*What ho! Give heed to my voice, give heed!*

*Ho, Bacchanal-train, my Bacchanal-train!*

(*Members of CHORUS answer severally*)

CHORUS 1

What cry was it?—whence did it ring? 'Twas the  
voice of mine Evian King!

DIONYSUS (*within*)

*What ho! What ho! I call yet again,*

*I, Semele's offspring, Zeus's seed*

580

CHORUS 2

What ho! Our Lord, our Lord! What ho!

Come to our revel-band thou,

Clamour-king, Clamour-king, now!

DIONYSUS (*within*)

*Earth-floor, sway to and fro in mighty earthquake-throe!*

(*Earthquake*)

CHORUS 3

Ha, swiftly shall Pentheus' hall,

Sore shaken, crash to its fall!

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὁ Διόνυσος ἀνὰ μέλαθρα·  
σέβετε νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

590 σέβομεν ὦ  
ἴδετε λάινα κίοσιν ἔμβολα  
διάδρομα τάδε  
Βρόμιος ἀλαλάζεται στέγας ἔσω

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄπτε κεραύνιον αἶθοπα λαμπάδα  
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέος

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾶ ᾶ,  
πῦρ οὐ λεύσσεις οὐδ' αὐγάζει  
Σεμέλας ἱερὸν ἀμφὶ τάφον, ἅν  
ποτε κεραυνόβολος ἔλιπε φλόγα  
Δίου βροντᾶς ;  
600 δίκετε πεδόσε δίκετε τρομερὰ  
σώματα, Μαινάδες·  
ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἄνω κάτω τιθεὶς ἔπεισι  
μέλαθρα τάδε Διὸς γόνος

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὕτως ἐκπεπληγμένοι φόβῳ  
πρὸς πέδῳ πεπτώκατ', ἤσθησθ', ὥς ἔοικε,  
Βακχίου  
διατινάξαντος τὰ Πενθέως δώματ' <sup>1</sup> ἀλλ' ἀνί-  
στατε  
σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σαρκὸς ἐξαμείψασαι τρόμον

<sup>1</sup> Musgrave for MSS δῶμα Πενθέως

## THE BACCHANALS

### CHORUS 4

Dionysus within yon halls is his godhead revealing !  
 With homage adore him

### CHORUS 5

We bow us before him

590

*(Earthquake)*

Lo, how the lintels of stone over yonder pillars are  
 reeling ! [the halls go pealing  
 Now doth the Clamour-king's triumph-shout through

DIONYSUS (*within*)

*Kindle the torch of the levin lurid-red . [spread  
 Let the compassing flames round the palace of Pentheus  
 (A great blaze of light enwraps the palace and the  
 monument of Semele)*

### CHORUS 6

Ha ! dost thou see not the wildfire enwreathed  
 Round the holy tomb—

Lo, dost thou mark it not well ?—

Which Semele thunder-blasted bequeathed,  
 Her memorial of doom

By the lightning from Zeus that fell ?

Fling to the earth, ye Maenads, fling

Your bodies that tremble with sore dismay !

For he cometh, our King, Zeus' scion, to bring

Yon halls to confusion and disarray

CHORUS *fall on their faces Enter* DIONYSUS *from the palace*

### DIONYSUS

Ho, ye Asian women, are ye so distraught with sheer  
 affright [meseems, the sight

That ye thus to earth be fallen ? Ye beheld,

When the house of Pentheus reeled as Bacchus

shook it Nay, upraise

From the earth your limbs, and banish from your  
 bodies fear's amaze

600

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φάος μέγιστον ἡμῖν εὐίου βακχεύματος,  
ὥς ἐσείδον ἀσμένη σε, μονάδ' ἔχουσ' ἐρημίαν

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

610 εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἀφίκεσθ', ἡνίκ' εἰσεπεμπόμην,  
Πενθέως ὥς εἰς σκοτεινάς ὀρκάνας πεσούμενος,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ οὔ, τίς μοι φύλαξ ἦν, εἰ σὺ συμφο-  
ρᾶς τύχοις,  
ἀλλὰ πῶς ἡλευθερώθης ἀνδρὸς ἀνοσίου τυχών,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὸς ἐξέσωσ' ἐμαυτὸν ῥαδίως ἄνευ πόνου

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέ σου συνήψε χεῖρε δεσμίοισιν ἐν βρόχοις;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν  
δοκῶν

οὔτ' ἔθιγεν οὔθ' ἤψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ'  
ἐβόσκετο

πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὐρών, οὐ καθεῖρξ' ἡμᾶς  
ἄγων,

τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς  
ποδῶν,

620 θυμὸν ἐκπνέων, ἰδρῶτα σώματος στάζων ἄπο,  
χείλεσιν διδούς ὀδόντας πλησίον δ' ἐγὼ παρὼν  
ἥσυχος θάσσω ἐλευσσον ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ  
χρόνῳ

ἀνετίναξ' ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα, καὶ μητρὸς  
τάφῳ

πῦρ ἀνήψ' ὁ δ' ὥς ἐσείδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαῖ  
δοκῶν

## THE BACCHANALS

### CHORUS

Hail to thee, to us the mightiest light of Evian  
revelry ! [on thee !  
With what rapture, late so lonely and forlorn, I look

### DIONYSUS

Ha, and did your hearts for terror fail you when I  
passed within, [Pentheus' dungeon-gin ? 610  
Deeming I should sink to darkness, caught in

### CHORUS

Wherefore not ? What shield had I, if thou into  
mischance shouldst fall ? [tyrant's thrall ?  
Nay, but how didst thou escape, who wast a godless

### DIONYSUS

I myself myself delivered, lightly, with nor toil nor  
strain

### CHORUS

Nay, but bound he not thine hands with coiling mesh  
of chain on chain ?

### DIONYSUS

My derision there I made him, that he deemed he  
fettered me, [empty phantasy  
Yet nor touched me, neither grasped me, fed on  
Nay, a bull beside the stalls he found where he  
would pen me fast.  
Round the knees and round the hoofs of this he 'gan  
his cords to cast,  
Breathing fury out, the while the sweat-gouts poured  
from every limb, [watching him 620  
While he gnawed upon his lips—and I beside him  
Calmly at mine ease was sitting Even then our  
Bacchus came,  
And as with an earthquake shook the house, and lit  
• a sudden flame [he saw his halls  
On his mother's tomb The king beholding thought

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- ἦσσι' ἐκείσε κατ' ἐκείσε, δμωσὶν Ἀχελῷον φέρειν  
 ἐννέπων, ἅπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δοῦλος ἦν, μάτην  
 πονῶν  
 διαμεθεῖς δὲ τόνδε μόχθον, ὥς ἐμοῦ πεφευγότος,  
 ἵεται ξίφος κελαινὸν ἀρπάσας δόμων ἔσω  
 καὶ θ' ὁ Βρόμιος, ὥς ἔμοιγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω,  
 630 φάσμι' ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ὁ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦθ'  
 ὠρμημένος  
 ἦσσε κακέντει φαεννὸν αἰθέρ', ὥς σφάζων ἐμέ.  
 πρὸς δὲ τοῖσι δ' αὐτῷ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος  
 λυμαίνεται·  
 δώματ' ἔρρηξεν χαμᾶζε συντεθράνωται δ' ἅπαν  
 πικροτάτους ἰδόντι δεσμούς τοὺς ἐμούς κόπου  
 δ' ὑπο  
 διαμεθεῖς ξίφος παρεῖται πρὸς θεὸν γὰρ ὦν  
 ἀνὴρ  
 εἰς μάχην ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ' ἥσυχος δ' ἐκβὰς ἐγὼ  
 δωμάτων ἤκω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πενθέως οὐ φροντίσας  
 ὥς δέ μοι δοκεῖ, ψοφεῖ γοῦν ἀρβύλη δόμων ἔσω,  
 εἰς προνώπι' αὐτίχ' ἤξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων  
 ἐρεῖ;  
 640 ῥαδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶσω, κὰν πνέων ἔλθῃ μέγα  
 πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σῶφρον' εὐοργη-  
 σίαν.

### ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

πέπονθα δεινὰ διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος,  
 ὃς ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος  
 ἔα ἔα  
 ὃδ' ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ τί τάδε, πῶς προνώπιος  
 φαίνει πρὸς οἴκοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἔξω βεβώς,

### ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

στήσον πόδ', ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθεσ ἥσυχον πόδα.

## THE BACCHANALS

Flame-enwrapped, and hither, thither, rushed he,  
     wildly bidding thralls                   [toiling there  
 Bring the water   Now was every bondman vainly  
 Then he let this labour be, as deeming I had 'scaped  
     the snare                                   [his falchion fell  
 Straight within the building rushed he, drawing forth  
 Then did Bromius, as to me it seemed—'tis but my  
     thought I tell,—                   [thereon straightway,  
 Fashion in his halls a wrath   he hurled himself 630  
 Rushed, and stabbed the light-pervaded an, as  
     thinking me to slay                   [pride to pass,  
 Then did Bacchus bring a new abasement of his  
 For he hurled to earth the building   There it lies,  
     a ruin-mass,—                   [with toil outworn,  
 Sight to make my bonds full bitter to him ! Now,  
 Letting drop the sword, he falleth fainting   He,  
     the mortal-born,                   [passed I through,  
 Dare to brave a God to battle ! Then unhindered  
 Recking nought of Pentheus . so from forth his halls  
     I come to you                   [fall's sound there is,—  
 But, methinks,—for there within the house a foot-  
 He shall straightway come without   Ha, what shall  
     he say unto this ?                   [stress,  
 Lightly shall I bear his bluster, whatsoe'er his fury's 640  
 For it is the wise man's part to rein his wiath in  
     sobeneess

*Enter* PENTHEUS

PENTHEUS

Foul outrage this !—the stranger hath escaped,  
 Though bound but now in fetters fast as fate  
 Ha !

There is the man ! What means this ? How hast thou  
 Won forth to stand before my very halls ?

DIONYSUS

Stay there, and let thy fury softly tread

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾶς ,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ εἶπον—ἢ οὐκ ἤκουσας—ὅτι λύσει μέ τις ,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

650

τίς ; τοὺς λόγους γὰρ εἰσφέρεις καινοὺς αἰεί

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὃς τὴν πολύβοτρυν ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῖς

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

\* \* \* \* \*

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὠνειδισαὶ δὴ τοῦτο Διονύσῳ καλόν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κλήειν κελεύω πάντα πύργον ἐν κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' , οὐχ ὑπερβαίνουσιν καὶ τείχη θεοί ,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

σοφὸς σοφὸς σύ, πλὴν ἂν δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἂν δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός  
κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε,  
ὃς ἐξ ὄρους πάρεστιν ἀγγελῶν τί σοι  
ἡμεῖς δέ σοι μενούμεν, οὐ φευξόμεθα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

660

Πενθεὺ κρατύνων τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός,  
ἦκω Κιθαιρῶν' ἐκλιπών, ἵν' οὐποτε  
λευκῆς ἀνεῖσαν χιόνος εὐαγεῖς βολαί

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦκεις δὲ ποῖαν προστιθεῖς σπουδὴν λόγου ,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Βάκχας ποτνιαῖδας εἰσιδών, αἰ τῆσδε γῆς  
οἷστροισι λευκὸν κῶλον ἐξηκόντισαν,



## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

How hast thou 'scaped thy bonds and comest forth ?

DIONYSUS

Said I not—or didst hear not?—"One will free me?"

PENTHEUS

Who ? Strange and ever strange thine answers are 650

DIONYSUS

He who makes grow for men the clustered vine

PENTHEUS

[Ay—who drives women frenzied from the home !]

DIONYSUS

'Tis Dionysus' glory, this thy scoff

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

I bid ye bai all towers round about

DIONYSUS

Why ? Cannot Gods pass even over walls ?

PENTHEUS

Wise art thou, wise—save where thou shouldst be wise

DIONYSUS

Where most needs wisdom, therein am I wise

But listen first to yon man, hear his tale

Who with some tidings from the mountains comes

I will await thee fear not lest I fly.

*Enter* HERDMAN

HERDMAN

Pentheus, thou ruler of this Theban land,

660

I from Cithaeron come, whence never fail

The glistening silver arrows of the snow

PENTHEUS

Bringing what weighty tidings comest thou ?

HERDMAN

I have seen wild Bacchanals, who from this land

Have darted forth with white feet, frenzy-stung

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἤκω φράσαι σοὶ καὶ πόλει χρήζων, ἄναξ,  
ὥς δεινὰ δρώσι θαυμάτων τε κρείσσονα  
θέλω δ' ἀκούσαι, πότερά σοι παρρησία  
φράσω τὰ κεῖθεν ἢ λόγον στειλώμεθα  
670 τὸ γὰρ τάχος σου τῶν φρενῶν δέδοικ', ἄναξ,  
καὶ τοῦξύθυμον καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν λίαν

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λέγ', ὥς ἄθῳς ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντως ἔσει·  
τοῖς γὰρ δικαίοις οὐχὶ θυμοῦσθαι χρεῶν  
ὅσῳ δ' ἂν εἴπης δεινότερα Βακχῶν πέρι,  
τοσῶδε μᾶλλον τὸν ὑποθέντα τὰς τέχνας  
γυναιξὶ τόνδε τῇ δίκη προσθήσομεν

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀγελαῖα μὲν βοσκήματ' ἄρτι πρὸς λέπας  
μόσχων ὑπεξήκριζον, ἡνίχ' ἥλιος  
ἀκτίνας ἐξίησι θερμαίνων χθόνα.  
680 ὁρῶ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικείων χορῶν,  
ὧν ἡρχ' ἐνὸς μὲν Αὐτονόη, τοῦ δευτέρου  
μήτηρ Ἀγαυή σή, τρίτου δ' Ἰνὼ χοροῦ  
ἡῦδον δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι,  
αἱ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρείσασαι φόβην,  
αἱ δ' ἐν δρυὸς φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδῳ κάρα  
εἰκῇ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ὥς σὺ φῆς  
ῶνωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ  
θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπριν ἡρημωμένας  
ἢ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν ἐν μέσαις  
690 σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, ἐξ ὕπνου κινεῖν δέμας,  
μυκήμαθ' ὥς ἤκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν  
αἱ δ' ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλερὸν ὁμμάτων ὕπνον  
ἀνῆξαν ὀρθαί, θαῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐκοσμίας,  
νέαι παλαιαὶ παρθένοι τ' ἔτ' ἄζυγες,  
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὤμους κόμας

## THE BACCHANALS

I come, King, fain to tell to thee and Thebes  
What strange, what passing wondrous deeds they do  
Yet would I hear if freely I may tell  
Things there beheld, or reef my story's sail  
For, King, I fear thy spirit's hasty mood, 670  
Thy passion and thine over-royal wiath

### PENTHEUS

Say on · of me shalt thou go all unscathed,  
For we may not be wroth with honest men  
The direr sounds thy tale of the Bacchanals,  
The sterner punishment will I inflict  
On him who taught our dames this wickedness

### HERDMAN

Thine herds of pasturing kine were even now  
Scaling the steep hillside, what time the sun  
First darted forth his rays to wain the earth,  
When lo, I see three Bacchant women-bands,— 680  
Autonoe chief of one, of one thy mother  
Agave, and the third band Ino led  
All sleeping lay, with bodies restful-strown,  
Some backward leaned on leafy sprays of pine,  
Some, with oak-leaves for pillows, on the ground  
Flung careless,—modestly, not, as thou say'st,  
Drunken with wine, amid the sighing of flutes  
Hunting desue through woodland shades alone  
Then to her feet sprang in the Bacchanals' midst  
Thy mother, crying aloud, "Shake from you  
sleep!" 690  
When fell our horned kine's lowing on hei ear  
They, dashing from their eyelids rosy sleep,  
Sprang up,—strange, fair array of ordered ranks,—  
Young wives, old matrons, maidens yet unwed  
First down their shoulders let they stream their hair

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- νεβρίδας τ' ἀνεστείλανθ' ὅσαισιν ἀμμάτων  
 σύνδεσμ' ἐλέλυτο, καὶ καταστίκτους δορὰς  
 ὄφεσι κατεζώσαντο λιχμῶσιν γένυν.  
 αἱ δ' ἀγκάλαισι δορκάδ' ἢ σκύμνους λύκων  
 700 ἀγρίους ἔχουσai λευκὸν ἐδίδοσαν γάλα,  
 ὅσαις νεοτόκοις μαστὸς ἦν σπαργῶν ἔτι  
 βρέφη λιπούσαις· ἐπὶ δ' ἔθεντο κισσίνους  
 στεφάνους δρυὸς τε μίλακός τ' ἀνθесφόρου.  
 θύρσον δέ τις λαβοῦσ' ἔπαισεν εἰς πέτραν,  
 ὅθεν δροσώδης ὕδατος ἐκπηδᾷ νοτίς·  
 ἄλλη δὲ νάρθηκ' εἰς πέδον καθήκε γῆς,  
 καὶ τῇδε κρήνην ἐξανήκ' οἴνου θεός·  
 ὅσαις δὲ λευκοῦ πώματος πόθος παρῆν,  
 710 ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι διαμῶσαι χθόνα  
 γάλακτος ἔσμονς εἶχον· ἐκ δὲ κισσίνων  
 θύρσων γλυκεῖαι μέλιτος ἔσταζον ῥοαί
- ὥστ', εἰ παρήσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις  
 εὐχαῖσιν ἂν μετῆλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε  
 ξυνήλθομεν δὲ βουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες,  
 κοινῶν λόγων δώσουντες ἀλλήλοις ἔριν,  
 ὥς δεινὰ δρώσι θαυμάτων τ' ἐπάξια·  
 καὶ τις πλάνης κατ' ἄστν καὶ τρίβων λόγων  
 ἔλεξεν εἰς ἅπαντας ὦ σεμνὰς πλάκας  
 ναῖοντες ὀρέων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα  
 720 Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων  
 χάριν τ' ἀνακτι θώμεθ', εὖ δ' ἡμῖν λέγειν  
 ἔδοξε, θάμνων δ' ἐλλοχίζομεν φόβαις  
 κρύψαντες αὐτούς· αἱ δὲ τὴν τεταγμένην  
 ὥραν ἐκίνουν θύρσον εἰς βακχεύματα,  
 Ἰακχον ἀθρόῳ στόματι τὸν Διὸς γόνον  
 Βρόμιον καλοῦσαι πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχευ' ὄρος

## THE BACCHANALS

Then looped they up their fawnskins,—they whose  
bands

Had fallen loose,—and girt the dappled fells [while  
Round them with snakes that licked their cheeks the  
Some, cradling fawns or wolf-cubs in their arms,  
Gave to the wild things of their own white milk,— 700  
Young mothers they, who had left their babes, that  
still [heads

Their breasts were full Then did they wreath their  
With ivy, oak, and flower-starred briony  
One grasped her thyrsus-staff, and smote the rock,  
And forth upleapt a fountain's showery spray  
One in earth's bosom planted her reed-wand,  
And up therethrough the God a wine-fount sent  
And whoso fain would drink white-foaming draughts  
Scared with their finger-tips the breast of earth,  
And milk gushed forth unstinted dipped the while 710  
Sweet streams of honey from their ivy-staves

Hadst thou been there, thou hadst, beholding this,  
With prayer approached the God whom now thou  
spurnest

Then we, thine herdmen and thy shepherds, drew  
Together, each with each to hold dispute  
Touching their awful deeds and marvellous  
And one, a townward truant, ready of speech,  
To all cried, "Dwellers on the terraces  
Of hallowed mountains, will ye that we chase  
From Bacchus' revel Agave, Pentheus' mother, 720  
And do our lord a kindness?" Well, thought we,  
He spake, and we in ambush hid ourselves  
Mid leaves of cypresses At the appointed time  
They waved the thyrsus for the revel-rites,  
With one voice calling Iacchus, Clamour-king,  
Zeus' seed The hills, the wild things all, were thrilled

- καὶ θῆρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ.  
 κυρεῖ δ' Ἀγαυή πλησίον θρώσκουσά μου·  
 730 καὶ γὰρ ἔξεπήδησ' ὥς συναρπάσαι θέλων,  
 λόχμην κενώσας ἔνθ' ἐκρυπτόμην δέμας.  
 ἡ δ' ἀνεβόησεν ὧ δρομάδες ἐμαὶ κύνες,  
 θηρώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ὑπ'. ἀλλ' ἔπεσθέ μοι,  
 ἔπεσθε θύρσοις διὰ χερῶν ὠπλισμένοι.  
 ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἐξηλύξαμεν  
 Βακχῶν σπαραγμόν, αἱ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην  
 μόσχους ἐπῆλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.  
 καὶ τὴν μὲν ἂν προσεῖδες εὐθελον πόριν  
 μυκωμένην ἔλκουσαν ἐν χεροῖν δίχα,<sup>1</sup>  
 740 ἄλλαι δὲ δαμάλας διεφόρουν σπαράγμασιν.  
 εἶδες δ' ἂν ἡ πλευρ' ἡ δίχην ἔμβασιν  
 ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω· κρεμαστὰ δὲ  
 ἔσταζ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν' αἷματι.  
 ταῦροι δ' ὑβριστὰι κεῖς κέρας θυμούμενοι  
 τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαῖαν δέμας,  
 μυριάσι χερῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων  
 θᾶσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ  
 ἡ σὲ ξυνάψαι βλέφαρα βασιλείοις κόραις  
 χωροῦσι δ' ὥστ' ὄρνιθες ἀρθεῖσαι δρόμῳ  
 πεδίῳ ὑποτάσεις, αἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοαῖς  
 750 εὐκαρπον ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν·  
 Ὑσιὰς τ' Ἐρυθράς θ', αἱ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας  
 νέρθεν κατωκήκασιν, ὥστε πολέμιοι  
 ἐπεισπεσοῦσαι πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω  
 διέφερον· ἥρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα·  
 ὁπόσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὑπο  
 προσείχετ' οὐδ' ἐπιπτεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον,  
 οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις

<sup>1</sup> Reiske for MSS ἔχουσιν δίκα.

## THE BACCHANALS

With ecstasy naught but shook as on they rushed  
Now nigh to me Agave chanced to leap,  
And forth I sprang as who would seize on her,  
Leaving the thicket of mine ambush void. 730  
Then shouted she, "What ho, my fleetfoot hounds,  
We are chased by these men! Ho ye, follow me—  
Follow, the thyrsus-javelins in your hands!"  
O then we fled, and fleeing scanty 'scaped  
The Bacchanals' rending grasp Down swooped they  
then

Upon our pasturing kine with swordless hand  
Then hadst thou seen thy mother with her hands  
Rend a deep-uddered heifer bellowing loud  
And others tore the calves in crimson shreds  
Ribs hadst thou seen and cloven hoofs far hauled 740  
This way and that, and flakes of flesh that hung  
And dripped all blood-bedabbled 'neath the pines  
Bulls chafing, lowering fiercely along the horn  
Erewhile, were tripped and hurled unto the earth,  
Dragged down by countless-clutching maiden hands  
More swiftly was the flesh that lapped their bones  
Stripped, than thou couldst have closed thy kingly  
eyes

On swept they, racing like to soaring buds,  
To lowland plains which by Asopus' streams  
Bear the rich harvests of the Theban folk 750  
Hysiae, Erythrae, 'neath Cithaeron's scaur  
Low-nestling,—swooping on them like to foes,  
This way and that way hauled they all their goods,  
Yea, from the houses caught they up the babes  
These, and all things laid on their shoulders, clung  
Unfastened, nothing to the dark earth fell,  
Nor brass nor iron, and upon their hair

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

760 πῦρ ἔφερον, οὐδ' ἔκαιεν οἱ δ' ὀργῆς ὑπο  
 εἰς ὄπλ' ἐχώρουν φερόμενοι Βακχῶν ὕπο·  
 οὐπερ τὸ δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν, ἀναξ  
 τοῖς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ἤμασσε λογχωτὸν βέλος,  
 κεῖναι δὲ θύρσους ἐξανιεῖσαι χερῶν  
 ἐτραυμάτιζον κἀπενώτιζον φυγῇ  
 γυναῖκες ἄνδρας, οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος  
 πάλιν δ' ἐχώρουν ὅθεν ἐκίνησαν πόδα,  
 κρήνας ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἅς ἀνῆκ' αὐταῖς θεός  
 νίψαντο δ' αἶμα, σταγόνα δ' ἐκ παρηίδων  
 γλώσση δράκοντες ἐξεφαίδρυνον χροός  
 τὸν δαίμον' οὖν τόνδ' ὅστις ἔστ', ὦ δέσποτα,  
 770 δέχου πόλει τῇδ', ὡς τά τ' ἄλλ' ἐστὶν μέγας,  
 κἀκεῖνό φασιν αὐτόν, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω,  
 τὴν πανσίλυπον ἄμπελον δοῦναι βροτοῖς  
 οἴνου δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντος οὐκ ἔστιν Κύπρις  
 οὐδ' ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔτι

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταρβῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἔλευθέρους  
 εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται  
 Διόνυσος ἥσσω οὐδενὸς θεῶν ἔφω

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

780 ἤδη τόδ' ἐγγὺς ὥστε πῦρ ὑφάπτεται  
 ὕβρισμα Βακχῶν, ψόγος ἐς Ἑλληνας μέγας  
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀκνεῖν δεῖ στείχ' ἐπ' Ἡλέκτρας ἰὼν  
 πύλας· κέλευε πάντας ἀσπιδηφόρους  
 ἵππων τ' ἀπαντᾶν ταχυπόδων ἐπεμβάτας  
 πέλτας θ' ὅσοι πάλλουσι καὶ τόξων χερὶ  
 ψάλλουσι νευράς, ὡς ἐπιστρατεύσομεν  
 Βάκχαισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλ' ὑπερβάλλει τάδε,  
 εἰ πρὸς γυναικῶν πεισόμεσθ' ἢ πάσχομεν



## THE BACCHANALS

They carried fire unscathed    The folk, in wrath  
To be by Bacchanals pillaged, rushed to arms  
Whereupon, King, was this strange sight to see — 760  
From them the steel-tipt javelin drew not blood,  
But they from their hands darting thyrsus-staves  
Dealt wound on wound, and they, the women, turned  
To flight men, for some God's hand wrought therein  
Then drew they back to whence then feet had come,  
To those same founts the God sent up for them,  
And washed the gore, while from their cheeks the  
snakes

Were licking with their tongues the blood-gouts  
clean

Wherefore, whoe'er this God be, O my lord,  
Receive him in this city, for, beside 770  
His other might, they tell of him, I hear,  
That he gave men the grief-assuaging vine  
When wine is no more found, then Love is not,  
Nor any joy beside is left to men

### CHORUS

Words wherein freedom rings I dread to speak  
Before the King, yet shall my thought be voiced  
Dionysus is not less than any God

### PENTHEUS

Lo, it is on us, kindling like a flame,  
The Bacchanal outrage, our reproach through  
Greece !

We may not dally —to Electra's gate 780  
Go thou, bid all my warriors that bear shield  
To meet me, and all riders of fleet steeds,  
And all that shake the buckler, all who twang  
The bowstring, for against the Bacchanals  
Forth will we march Yea, this should pass all bounds,  
To endure of women that we now endure !

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ

790 πείθει μὲν οὐδέν, τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων κλύων,  
Πενθεῦ· κακῶς δὲ πρὸς σέθεν πάσχων ὁμῶς  
οὐ φημι χρῆναί σ' ὅπλ' ἐπαίρεσθαι θεῶ,  
ἀλλ' ἡσυχάζειν Βρόμιος οὐκ ἀνέξεται  
κινεῦντα Βάκχας εὐίων ὁρῶν ἄπο.

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐ μὴ φρενώσεις μ', ἀλλὰ δέσμιος φυγῶν  
σώσει τόδ', ἥ σοὶ πάλιν ἀναστρέψω δίκην.

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

θύοιμ' ἂν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θυμούμενος  
πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θνητὸς ὦν θεῶ

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι,  
πολὺν ταράξας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

φεύξεσθε πάντες· καὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀσπίδας  
θύρσοισι Βακχῶν ἐκτρέπειν χαλκηλίτους

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

800 ἀπόρῳ γε τῷδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένῳ,  
ὃς οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε δρῶν σιγήσεται

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὦ τᾶν, ἔτ' ἔστιν εὖ καταστῆσαι τάδε

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δρῶντα, δουλεύοντα δουλείαις ἐμαῖς,

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ γυναικας δεῦρ' ὅπλων ἄξω δίχα

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἴμοι τόδ' ἤδη δόλιον εἰς με μηχανᾶ

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ποιόν τι, σῶσαί σ' εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς,

## THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

No whit thou yieldest, though thou hear'st my words,  
Pentheus Yet, though thou dost despite to me,  
I warn thee—bear not arms against a God,  
But bide still Bromius will not brook that thou 790  
Shouldst drive his Bacchanals from their revel-hills

PENTHEUS

School thou not me, but, having 'scaped thy bonds,  
Content thee . else again I punish thee

DIONYSUS

Better slay victims unto him than kick  
Against the pricks, man raging against God

PENTHEUS

Victims? Ay, women-victims, fitly slain,—  
Wild work of slaughter midst Cithaeron's glens!

DIONYSUS

Flee shall ye all, and shame were this, that shields  
Brass-forged from wands of Bacchanals turn back

PENTHEUS

This stranger!—vainly wrestle we with him 800  
Doing nor suffering will he hold his peace

DIONYSUS

Friend, yet this evil may be turned to good

PENTHEUS

How?—by becoming my bondwomen's thrall?

DIONYSUS

I without arms will bring the women hither

PENTHEUS

Ha! here for me thou plottest treachery!

DIONYSUS

Treachery?—I would save thee by mine art!

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ξυνέθεσθε κοινῇ τάδ', ἵνα βακχεύητ' αἰεί

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ξυνεθέμην τοῦτό γ', ἴσθι, τῷ θεῷ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐκφέρετέ μοι δεῦρ' ὄπλα· σὺ δὲ παῦσαι λέγων

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

810

ᾄ

βούλει σφ' ἐν ὄρεσι συγκαθημένας ἰδεῖν ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δούς χρυσοῦ σταθμόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τοῦδε πέπτωκας μέγαν ,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λυπρῶς νιν εἰσίδοιμ' ἂν ἐξωνωμένας

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὅμως δ' ἴδοις ἂν ἡδέως ᾄ σοι πικρά ,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

σάφ' ἴσθι, σιγῇ γ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις καθήμενος

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄλλ' ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, καὶ ἔλθης λάθρα

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἄλλ' ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξεῖπας τάδε

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄγωμεν οὖν σε καπιχειρήσεις ὁδῷ ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

820

ἄγ' ὥς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δέ σοι φθονῶ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στεῖλαί νυν ἀμφὶ χρωτὶ βυσσίνους πέπλους.

## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ye have made this covenant, so to revel aye

DIONYSUS

Nay know, that covenant made I with the God

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

Bring forth mine arms !—thou, make an end of speech

DIONYSUS

Ho thou !

Wouldst thou behold them camped upon the hills ?

PENTHEUS<sup>1</sup>

Ay—though with sumless gold I bought the sight

DIONYSUS

Why on this mighty longing hast thou fallen ?

PENTHEUS

To see them drunk with wine—a bitter sight !

DIONYSUS

Yet wouldst thou gladly see a bitter sight ?

PENTHEUS

Yea, sooth, in silence crouched beneath the pines

DIONYSUS

Yet will they track thee, stealthily though thou come

PENTHEUS

Openly then !—yea, well hast thou said this

DIONYSUS

Shall I then guide thee ? Wilt essay the path ?

PENTHEUS

Lead on with speed I grudge thee all delay !

DIONYSUS

Array thee now in robes of linen fine

<sup>1</sup> From this time Pentheus speaks as one hypnotized

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ; εἰς γυναικάς ἐξ ἀνδρὸς τελῶ ,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

μή σε κτάνωσιν, ἣν ἀνὴρ ὀφθῆς ἐκεῖ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὖ γ' εἶπας αὐτό, καί τις εἰ πάλαι σοφός

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἐξεμούσωσεν τάδε

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πῶς οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἃ σύ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἴσω μολῶν

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τίνα στολήν, ἣ θῆλυν, ἀλλ' αἰδώς μ' ἔχει.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐκέτι θεατῆς Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἰ ,

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

830 στολήν δὲ τίνα φῆς ἀμφὶ χρώτ' ἐμὸν βαλεῖν ,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σῶ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι ,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

πέπλοι ποδήρεις ἐπὶ κάρᾳ δ' ἔσται μίτρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦ καί τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοί ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

θύρσον γε χειρὶ καὶ νεβροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ ,

ἀλλ' αἷμα θήσεις συμβαλὼν Βάκχαις μάχην.

## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Wherefoie? From man shall I to woman turn?

DIONYSUS

Lest they should kill thee, seeing thee there as man

PENTHEUS

Well said—yea, shiewd hast thou been heretofore

DIONYSUS

Such science Dionysus taught to me

PENTHEUS

How then shall thy fair rede become mine act?

DIONYSUS

I will into thine halls, and robe thee there

PENTHEUS

What robe? A woman's?—nay, but I think shame

DIONYSUS

Is thy desire to watch the Maenads dead?

PENTHEUS

In what garb, say'st thou, wouldst thou drape my form? 830

DIONYSUS

Thine head with flowing tresses will I tire

PENTHEUS

And the next fashion of my vesture—what?

DIONYSUS

Long robes and on thine head a coil shall be

PENTHEUS

Naught else but these wouldst thou add unto me?

DIONYSUS

Thyrsus in hand, and dappled fell of fawn

PENTHEUS

I cannot drape me in a woman's robe!

DIONYSUS

Then fight the Maenads—spill thy people's blood

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ὀρθῶς μολεῖν χρῆ πρῶτον εἰς κατασκοπὴν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

σοφώτερον γοῦν ἢ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

840 καὶ πῶς δι' ἄστεως εἶμι Καδμείους λαθών,

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὁδοὺς ἐρήμους ἔμεν· ἐγὼ δ' ἡγήσομαι

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

πᾶν κρεῖσσον ὥστε μὴ ἴγγελᾶν Βάκχας ἐμοί  
ἐλθόντ' ἐς οἴκους ἂν δοκῇ βουλευέσμεν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἔξεστι πάντῃ τό γ' ἐμὸν εὐτρεπὲς πάρα

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἡ γὰρ ὅπλ' ἔχων πορεύσομαι  
ἢ τοῖσι σοῖσι πείβομαι βουλευμάσιν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

850 γυναῖκες, ἀνὴρ εἰς βόλον καθίσταται  
ἤξει δὲ Βάκχας, οὗ θανὼν δώσει δίκην  
Διόνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ εἶ πρόσω  
τισώμεθ' αὐτόν· πρῶτα δ' ἔκστησον φρενῶν,  
ἐνεὶς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν ὥς φρονῶν μὲν εὖ  
οὐ μὴ θελήσῃ θῆλυν ἐνδύναϊ στολήν,  
ἔξω δ' ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ἐνδύσεται  
χρήζω δέ νιν γέλωτα Θηβαίοις ὀφλεῖν  
γυναικόμορφον ἀγόμενον δι' ἄστεως  
ἐκ τῶν ἀπειλῶν τῶν πρίν, αἷσι δεινὸς ἦν  
ἄλλ' εἶμι κόσμον ὄνπερ εἰς Ἀἰδοῦ λαβὼν  
ἄπεισι, μητρὸς ἐκ χεροῖν κατασφαγείς,  
860 Πενθεὶ προσάψων γνώσεται δὲ τὸν Διὸς  
Διόνυσον, ὃς πέφυκεν ἐν τέλει θεὸς  
δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἡπιώτατος.



## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ay, true —first must I go and spy them out

DIONYSUS

Sooth, wiser so than hunt thee ills with ills

PENTHEUS

Yet, how through Cadmus' city pass unseen ? 840

DIONYSUS

By lone paths will we go    Myself will guide

PENTHEUS

Better were anything than Bacchants' mock !  
We will pass in        what fits will I devise

DIONYSUS

So be it · Howe'er thou choose, mine help thou hast

PENTHEUS

I go        I shall march haply sword in hand,  
Or—or—do haply as thou counselest        [*Exit*

DIONYSUS

Women, the man sets foot within the toils  
The Bacchants—and death's penalty—shall he find  
Dionysus, play thy part now , thou art near  
Let us take vengeance    Craze thou first his brain,    850  
Indarting sudden madness    Whole of wit,  
Ne'er will he yield to don the woman's robe  
Yet shall he don, driven wide of reason's course  
I long withal to make him Thebes' derision,  
In woman-semblance led the city through,  
After the erstwhile terrors of his threats  
I go, to lay on Pentheus the attire  
Which he shall take with him to Hades, slain  
By a mother's hands    And he shall know Zeus'  
son

Dionysus, who hath risen at last a God    860  
Most terrible, yet kindest unto men        [*Exit*

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄρ' ἐν παννυχίοις χοροῖς στρ  
 θήσω ποτὲ λευκὸν ·  
 πόδ' ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν  
 εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν  
 ῥίπτουσ', ὥς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς  
 ἐμπαίζουσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς,  
 ἥνικ' ἂν φοβεράν φύγῃ  
 θήραν ἔξω φυλακᾶς  
 870 εὐπλέκτων ὑπὲρ ἀρκύων,  
 θύσσων δὲ κυναγέτας  
 συντείνῃ δρόμημα κυνῶν  
 μόχθοις τ' ὠκυδρόμοις τ' ἀέλ-  
 λαις θρώσκει πεδίον  
 παραποτάμιον, ἡδομένα  
 βροτῶν ἐρημίαις  
 σκιαροκόμου τ' ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὕλας

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον  
 παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς  
 ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς  
 880 τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν,  
 ὃ τι καλὸν φίλον αἰεῖ

ὀρμᾶται μόλις, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀντ  
 πιστόν τι τὸ θεῖον  
 σθένος ἀπευθύνει δὲ βροτῶν  
 τοὺς τ' ἀγνωμοσύναν  
 τιμῶντας καὶ μὴ τὰ θεῶν  
 αὔξοντας σὺν μαινομένα δόξα  
 κρυπτεύουσι δὲ ποικίλως  
 δαρὸν χρόνου πόδα καὶ

## THE BACCHANALS

### CHORUS

Ah, shall my white feet in the dances gleam (St.)  
The hivelong night again? Ah, shall I there  
Float through the Bacchanal's ecstatic dream,  
Tossing my neck into the dewy air?—

Like to a fawn that gambols mid delight  
Of pastures green, when she hath left behind  
The chasing horror, and hath sped her flight  
Past watchers, o'er nets deadly-deftly twined,

Though shouting huntsmen cheer the racing hounds 870  
Onward, the while with desperate stress and strain  
And bursts of tempest-footed speed she bounds  
Far over reaches of the river-plain,

Till sheltering arms of trees around her close,  
The twilight of the tresses of the woods,—  
O happy ransomed one, safe hid from foes  
Where no man tracks the forest-solitudes!

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more  
glorious  
That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—  
O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious? 880  
Gloiy is crown and sum of human bliss!

Slowly on-sweepeth, but unerringly, (Ant)  
The might of Heaven, with sternest lessoning  
For men who in their own mad fantasy  
Exalt their unbelief, and crown it king—

Mortals who dare belittle things divine!  
Ah, but the Gods in subtle ambush wait  
On treads the foot of time, but their design  
Is unrelinquished, and the ruthless fate

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

890 θηρώσιν τὸν ἄσεπτον· οὐ  
 γὰρ κρείσσον ποτε τῶν νόμων  
 γιγνώσκειν χρῆ καὶ μελετᾶν  
 κούφα γὰρ δαπάνα νομί-  
 ζειν ἰσχὺν τόδ' ἔχειν,  
 ὃ τι ποτ' ἄρα τὸ δαιμόνιον,  
 τό τ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ  
 νόμιμον αἰεὶ φύσει τε πεφυκός.  
 τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον  
 παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς  
 ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς  
 900 τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν ;  
 ὃ τι καλὸν φίλον αἰεὶ

εὐδαίμων μὲν ὃς ἐκ θαλάσσης ἐπφδ.  
 ἔφυγε χεῖμα, λιμένα δ' ἔκιχεν·  
 εὐδαίμων δ' ὃς ὑπερθε μόχθων  
 ἐγένεθ' ἕτερα δ' ἕτερος ἕτερον  
 ὄλβῳ καὶ δυνάμει παρήλθεν.  
 μυρίαὶ δὲ μυρίοισιν  
 ἔτ' εἰς' ἐλπίδες· αἱ μὲν  
 τελευτῶσιν ἐν ὄλβῳ  
 βροτοῖς, αἱ δ' ἀπέβησαν  
 910 τό δὲ κατ' ἡμαρ ὅτῳ βίος  
 εὐδαίμων, μακαρίζω.

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον ὄνθ' ἂ μὴ χρεὼν ὀρᾶν  
 σπεύδοντά τ' ἀσπούδαστα, Πενθέα λέγω,  
 ἔξιθι πάροιθε δωμάτων, ὀφθητί μοι  
 σκευὴν γυναικὸς μαινάδος Βάκχης ἔχων,  
 μητρός τε τῆς σῆς καὶ λόχου κατὰσκοπος·  
 πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφὴν μιᾷ.

## THE BACCHANALS

Quests as a sleuth-hound till it shall have tracked 890

The godless down in that relentless hunt  
We may not, in the heart's thought or the act,  
Set us above the law of use and wont

Little it costs, faith's precious heritage,  
To trust that whatsoe'er from Heaven is sent  
Hath sovereign sway, whate'er through age on age  
Hath gathered sanction by our nature's bent

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more  
glorious

That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—  
O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious ? 900  
Gloiy is crown and sum of human bliss !

Blest who from ravening seas (*Epode*)  
Hath 'scaped to haven-peace,  
Blest who hath triumphed in endeavour's toil and  
throe

Some men to higher height  
Attain, of wealth, of might, [glow  
Than others, myriad hopes in myriad hearts still  
To fair fruition brought  
Are some, some come to naught. 910  
Happy is he whose bliss from day to day doth grow

*Enter* DIONYSUS

DIONYSUS

Thou who dost burn to see forfended things,  
Pentheus, O zealous with an evil zeal,  
Come forth before thine halls. be seen of me  
Womanlike clothed in frenzied Bacchant's garb,  
To spy upon thy mother and her troop

*Enter* PENTHEUS

So !—like a daughter of Cadmus is thy form

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

920 καὶ μὴν ὀρᾶν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ,  
 δισσὰς δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπτάστομον  
 καὶ ταῦρος ἡμῖν πρόσθεν ἡγεῖσθαι δοκεῖς  
 καὶ σῶ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι  
 ἀλλ' ἢ ποτ' ἦσθα θήρ, τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁ θεὸς ὁμαρτεῖ, πρόσθεν ὦν οὐκ εὐμενής,  
 ἔνσπονδος ἡμῖν νῦν δ' ὀρᾷς ἅ χρε' ὀρᾶν

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί φαίνομαι δῆτ', οὐχὶ τὴν Ἰνουὺς στάσιν  
 ἢ τὴν Ἀγαύης ἐστάναι μητρός γ' ἐμῆς,

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὰς ἐκείνας εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ σ' ὀρῶν  
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἔδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ' ὅδε,  
 οὐχ ὥς ἐγὼ νιν ὑπὸ μίτρᾳ καθήρμους

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

930 ἔνδον προσείων αὐτὸν ἀνασείων τ' ἐγὼ  
 καὶ βακχιάζων ἐξ ἔδρας μεθώρμισα

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει,  
 πάλιν καταστελοῦμεν· ἀλλ' ὄρθου κάρᾳ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἰδοῦ, σὺ κόσμει σοὶ γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δῆ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ζῶναί τέ σοι χαλῶσι κούχ' ἐξῆς πέπλων  
 στολίδες ὑπὸ σφυροῖσι τείνουσιν σέθεν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κάμοι δοκοῦσι παρά γε δεξιὸν πόδα  
 τὰνθένδε δ' ὀρθῶς παρὰ τένοντ' ἔχει πέπλος

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

940 ἢ ποῦ με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσει φίλων,  
 ὅταν παρὰ λόγον σῶφρονας Βάκχας ἴδῃς.

## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Aha ! meseemeth I behold two suns,  
A twofold Thebes, our seven-gated buig !  
A bull thou seem'st that leadeth on before ,  
And horns upon thine head have spouted forth  
How, *wast* thou brute ?—bull art thou verily now !

DIONYSUS

The God attends us, gracious not ere this,  
Leagued with us now now seest thou as thou shouldst

PENTHEUS

Whose semblance bear I ? Have I not the mien  
Of Ino, or my mother Agave's port ?

DIONYSUS

Their very selves I seem to see in thee  
Yet, what ?—this tress hath from his place escaped,  
Not as I braided it beneath the coil

PENTHEUS

Tossing it forth and back within, in whirls  
Of Bacchic frenzy, I disordered it

DIONYSUS

Nay, I, who have taken thy tire-maiden's part,  
Will rearrange it Come, hold up thine head

PENTHEUS

Lo there—thou lay it smooth I am in thine hands

DIONYSUS

Now is thy girdle loose, thy garment's folds  
Droop not below thine ankles evenly

PENTHEUS

Yea, by my right foot so, meseems, it is  
To left, true by the sinew hangs the robe

DIONYSUS

Me wilt thou surely count thy chiefest friend,  
When sight of sober Bacchants cheats thine hopes 940

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότερα δὲ θύρσον δεξιᾷ λαβὼν χερὶ  
ἢ τῇδε, Βάκχῃ μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι ,

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν δεξιᾷ χρὴ χᾶμα δεξιῷ ποδὶ  
αἴρειν νιν αἰνῶ δ' ὅτι μεθέστηκας φρενῶν

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἄρ' ἂν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρώνας πτυχὰς  
αὐταῖσι Βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὥμοις φέρειν ,

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

δύναι' ἄν, εἰ βούλοιο τὰς δὲ πρὶν φρένας  
οὐκ εἶχες ὑγίεις, νῦν δ' ἔχεις οἷας σε δεῖ

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

930 μοχλοὺς φέρωμεν , ἢ χεροῖν ἀνασπάσω  
κορυφαῖς ὑποβαλὼν ὤμον ἢ βραχίονα ;

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μὴ σύ γε τὰ Νυμφῶν διολέσης ἰδρύματα  
καὶ Πανὸς ἔδρας, ἔνθ' ἔχει συρίγματα

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ σθένει νικητέον  
γυναικας, ἐλάττεισιν δ' ἐμὸν κρύψω δέμας

## ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κρύψει σὺ κρύψιν ἣν σε κρυφθῆναι χρεῶν  
ἐλθόντα δόλιον Μαινάδων κατὰσκοπον

## ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαῖς ὄρνιθας ὥς  
λέκτρων ἔχεσθαι φιλτάτοις ἐν ἔρκεσιν



## THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

This thyrsus—shall I hold it in this hand,  
Or this, the more to seem true Bacchanal ?

DIONYSUS

In the right hand, and with the right foot timed  
Lift it —all praise to thy converted heart !

PENTHEUS

Could I upon my shoulders raise the glens<sup>1</sup>  
Of Mount Cithaeron, yea, and the Bacchanals ?

DIONYSUS

Thou mightest, an thou wouldst erewhile thy soul  
Was warped , but now 'tis even as befits

PENTHEUS

With levels ?—or shall mine hands tear it up  
With arm or shoulder thrust beneath its crests ? 950

DIONYSUS

Now nay—the shrines of Nymphs destroy not thou,  
And haunts of Pan that with his piping ring

PENTHEUS

True—true · we must not overcome by force  
The women I will hide me midst the pines

DIONYSUS

Hide ?—thou shalt hide as Fate ordains thine hiding,  
Who com'st with guile, a spy on Bacchanals

PENTHEUS

Methinks I see them mid the copses caught,  
Like birds, in toils of their sweet dalliance

<sup>1</sup> Among signs of incipient madness is a failure to discriminate resistance, so that the patient, while raising slight weights (here, the thyrsus), imagines himself to be putting forth strength enough to raise enormous ones

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

960 οὐκοῦν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποστέλλει φύλαξ  
λήψει δ' ἴσως σφᾶς, ἣν σὺ μὴ ληφθῆς πάρος

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

κόμιζε διὰ μέσης με Θηβαίας πόλεως  
μόνος γάρ εἰμ' αὐτῶν ἀνὴρ τολμῶν τόδε

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

μόνος σὺ πόλεως τῆσδ' ὑπερκάμνεις,μόνος·  
τοιγάρ σ' ἀγῶνες ἀναμένουσιν οὓς ἐχρῆν  
ἔπου δέ πομπὸς δ' εἰμ' ἐγὼ σωτήριος,  
κεῖθεν δ' ἀπάξει σ' ἄλλος,—

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἡ τεκοῦσά γε

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐπίσημον ὄντα πᾶσιν—

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἐπὶ τόδ' ἔρχομαι

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

φερόμενος ἥξεις—

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἀβρότητ' ἐμὴν λέγεις

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐν χερσὶ μητρός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

καὶ τρυφᾶν μ' ἀναγκάσεις.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τρυφάς γε τοιάσδ'—

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἀξίων μὲν ἄπτομαι

## THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

To this end then art thou appointed watchman  
Perchance shalt catch them—if they catch not thee 960

PENTHEUS

On through the midst of Thebes' town usher me '  
I am their one *man*, I alone dare this '

DIONYSUS

Alone for Thebes thou travailest, thou alone ,  
Wherefore for thee wait struggle and strain fore-  
doomed  
Follow all safely will I usher thee  
Another thence shall bring thee,—

PENTHEUS

Ay, my mother '

DIONYSUS

To all men manifest—

PENTHEUS

For this I come

DIONYSUS

High-borne shalt thou return—

PENTHEUS

Soft ease for me ?

DIONYSUS

On a mother's hands.

PENTHEUS

Thou wouldst thrust pomp on me '

DIONYSUS

Nay, 'tis but such pomp—

PENTHEUS

As is my desert

970

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἔκτειν', Ἀγαυή, χεῖρας αἷ' θ' ὀμόσποροι  
Κάδμου θυγατέρες· τὸν νεανίαν ἄγω  
τόνδ' εἰς ἀγῶνα μέγαν, ὃ νικήσων δ' ἐγὼ  
καὶ Βρόμιος ἔσται· τᾶλλα δ' αὐτὸ σημανεῖ

*ἵτε θαοὶ Λύσσας κύνες ἴτ' εἰς ὄρος, στρ  
θίασον ἐνθ' ἔχουσι Κάδμου κόραι,  
ἀνοιστρέσατέ νιν  
ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν γυναικομίμῳ στολᾷ  
λυσσωδή κατὰ σκοπον Μαινάδων.*

μάτηρ πρῶτά νιν λευρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρας  
ἢ σκόλοπος ὄψεται  
δοκεύοντα, Μαινάσιν δ' ἀπύσει·  
τίς ὃδε Καδμείων  
μαστὴρ ὀρειδρόμων  
ἐς ὄρος ἐς ὄρος ἔμολεν, ὦ Βάκχαι,  
τίς ἄρα νιν ἔτεκεν,  
οὐ γὰρ ἐξ αἵματος γυναικῶν ἔφυ,  
λεαίνας δέ τινος ὃδ' ἦ Γοργόνων  
Λιβυσσᾶν γένος

## THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Strange, strange man ! Strange shall thine experience  
be.

So shalt thou win renown that soars to heaven

[*Exit* PENTHEUS

Agave, stretch forth hands , ye sisters, stretch,

Daughters of Cadmus ! To a mighty strife

I bring this prince The victor I shall be

And Bromius All else shall the issue show [*Exit*

CHORUS

(*St.*)

Up, ye swift hell-hounds of Madness ! Away to the  
mountain-glens, where [fury, to tear

Cadmus's daughters hold revel, and sting them to  
Him who hath come woman-vestured to spy on the  
Bacchanals there,

Frenzy-struck fool that he is !—for his mother shall 980  
foremost descry [tree he would spy

Him, as from water-worn scaur or from storm-riven  
That which they do, and her shout to the Maenads  
shall peal from on high —

“ Who hath come hither, hath trodden the paths to  
the mountain that lead,

Spying on Cadmus's daughters, the maids o'er the  
mountains that speed,

Bacchanal-sisters ?—what mother hath brought to  
the birth such a seed ?

Who was it ?—who ?—for I ween he was born not of  
womankind's blood [of the wood ,

Rather he sprang from the womb of a lioness, scourge  
Haply is spawn of the Gorgons of Libya, the demon-  
brood ”

990

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἴτω δίκᾱ φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος  
 φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ  
 τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος  
 τόκον γηγενῇ

ὃς ἀδίκῳ γνώμα παρανόμῳ τ' ὀργᾷ                    ἀντ.  
 περὶ σά, Βάκχι', ὄργια ματρός τε σᾶς  
 μανείσα πραπίδι

1000 παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται,  
 τὰνίκατον ὥς κρατήσων βία

γνώμαν σώφρον', ἃ θνατοῖς ἀπροφάσιστος  
 εἰς τὰ θεῶν ἔφνυ,  
 βροτείαν τ' ἔχειν, ἄλυπος βίος.  
 τὸ σοφὸν οὐ φθόνῳ  
 χαίρω θηρεύουσα,  
 τὰ δ' ἕτερα μεγάλα φανερά τ' ὄντ' αἰεί,

ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον  
 ἡμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ' εὐαγοῦντ' εὐσεβεῖν,  
 1010 τὰ δ' ἔξω νόμιμα δίκας ἐκβαλόν-  
 τα τιμᾶν θεούς.

ἴτω δίκᾱ φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος  
 φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ  
 τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος  
 τόκον γηγενῇ

## THE BACCHANALS

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of  
avenging appear [born, and shear  
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-  
Clean through his throat, for he feareth not God,  
neither law doth he fear

(Ant)

Lo, how in impious mood, and with lawless intent,  
and with spite [he cometh to fight,  
Madness-distraught, with thy rites and thy mother's  
Bacchus—to bear the invincible down by his im-  
potent might !

1000

Thus shall a mortal have sorrowless days, if he  
keepeth his soul [control,  
Sober in spirit, and swift in obedience to heaven's  
Murmuring not, neither pressing beyond his mor-  
tality's goal

Not their presumptuous wisdom I covet I seek for  
mine own— [so may be known,  
Yea, in the quest is mine happiness—things that not  
Glorious wisdom and great, from the days ever-  
lasting forth-shown,

Even to fashion in pureness my life and in holiness  
aye, [of the day,  
Following ends that are noble from dawn to the death  
Honouring Gods, and refusing to walk in injustice's  
way

1010

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of  
avenging appear [born, and shear  
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-  
Clean through his throat; for he feareth not God,  
neither law doth he fear

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

φάνηθι ταῦρος ἢ πολύκρανος ἰδεῖν ἐπῶδ.  
δράκων ἢ πυριφλέγων  
ὀρᾶσθαι λέων

1020 ἴθ', ὦ Βάκχε, θηραγρευτῇ Βακχᾶν  
γελῶντι προσώπῳ περὶβαλε  
βρόχον ἐπὶ θανάσιμον  
ἀγέλαν πεσόντι τὰν Μαινάδων.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δῶμ' ὃ πρίν ποτ' ἠντύχεις ἄν' Ἑλλάδα,  
Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὃς τὸ γηγενὲς  
δράκοντος ἔσπειρ' ὄφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος,  
ὥς σε στενάζω, δοῦλος ὦν μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως  
χρηστοῖσι δούλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον,

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1030 Πενθεὺς ὄλωλε, παῖς Ἐχίονος πατρός

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦναξ Βρόμιε θεὸς φαίνει μέγας.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς φῆς, τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; ἢ ἔπ' τοῖς ἐμοῖς  
χαίρεις κακῶς πράσσουσι δεσπόταις, γύναι,

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐάζω ξένα μέλεσι βαρβάροις  
οὐκέτι γὰρ δεσμῶν ὑπὸ φόβῳ πτήσω.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὧδ' ἄγεις\* \* \* \*



## THE BACCHANALS

(*Epode*)

O Dionysus, reveal thee!—appear as a bull to behold,  
Or be thou seen as a dragon, a monster of heads  
                manifold,                         [of him rolled  
Or as a lion with splendours of flame round the limbs

Come to us, Bacchus, and smiling in mockery com- 1020  
pass him round [hunter be bound,  
Now with the toils of destruction, and so shall the  
Trapped mid the throng of the Maenads, the quarry  
his questing hath found

*Enter* MESSENGER.

## MESSENGER

O house of old through Hellas prosperous  
Of that Sidonian patriarch, who sowed  
The earth-born serpent's dragon-teeth in earth,  
How I bemoan thee ! Though a thrall I be,  
Their lords' calamities touch loyal thalls

## CHORUS

What now?—hast tidings of the Bacchanals?

## MESSANGER

Pentheus is dead    Echion's son is dead. 1030

## CHORUS

Bromius my King ! thou hast made thy godhead plain !

## MESSANGER

How, what is this thou say'st ? Dost thou exult,  
Woman, upon my lord's calamities ?

**CHORUS**

An alien I, I chant glad outland strain,  
Who cower no more in terror of the chain

## MESSENGER

Deemest thou Thebes so void of men, [that ill  
Have left her powerless to punish thee?]

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ Διόνυσος ὁ Διόνυσος, οὐ Θῆβαι  
κράτος ἔχουσ' ἐμόν.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1040

συγγνωστὰ μέν σοι, πλὴν ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις  
κακοῖσι χαίρειν, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐ καλόν

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔννεπέ μοι, φράσον, τίني μόρῳ θνήσκει  
ἄδικος ἄδικά τ' ἐκπορίζων ἀνὴρ ,

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1050

ἐπεὶ θεράπνας τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονὸς  
λιπόντες ἐξέβημεν Ἀσωποῦ ῥοάς,  
λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν  
Πενθεὺς τε καὶ γὰρ, δεσπότη γὰρ εἰπόμην,  
ξένος θ' ὃς ἡμῖν πομπὸς ἦν θεωρίας  
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ποιηρὸν ἵζομεν νάπος,  
τά τ' ἐκ ποδῶν συγῆλὰ καὶ γλώσσης ἅπο  
σφύζοντες, ὡς ὀρῶμεν οὐχ ὀρώμενοι  
ἦν δ' ἄγκος ἀμφίκριμνον, ὕδασι διάβροχον,  
πεύκαισι συσκιάζον, ἔνθα Μαινάδες  
καθῆντ' ἔχουσαι χεῖρας ἐν τερπνοῖς πόνοις  
αἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν θύρσον ἐκλελοιπότα  
κισσῷ κομήτην αὐθις ἐξανέστεφον,  
αἱ δ' ἐκλιπούσαι ποικίλ' ὡς πῶλοι ζυγὰ  
βακχεῖον ἀντέκλαζον ἀλλήλαις μέλος  
Πενθεὺς δ' ὁ τλήμων θῆλυν οὐχ ὀρών ὄχλον  
ἔλεξε τοιάδ' ὦ ξέν', οὐ μὲν ἔσταμεν,  
οὐκ ἐξικνούμαι Μαινάδων ὄσσοις νόθων·  
ὄχθον δ' ἐπεμβὰς ἢ ἐλάτην ὑψαύχενα  
ἴδοιμ' ἂν ὀρθῶς Μαινάδων αἰσχροουργίαν.  
τοῦντεῦθεν ἤδη τοῦ ξένου τι θαῦμ' ὀρώ  
λαβὼν γὰρ ἐλάτης οὐράνιον ἄκρον κλάδον

1060

## THE BACCHANALS

### CHORUS

Dionysus it is, 'tis the King of the Vine  
That hath lordship o'er me, no Thebes of thine !

### MESSENGER

This might be pardoned, save that base it is,  
Women, to joy o'er evils past recall 1040

### CHORUS

Tell to me, tell,—by what doom died he,  
The villain devising villainy ?

### MESSENGER

When, from the homesteads of this Theban land  
Departing, we had crossed Asopus' streams,  
Then we began to breast Cithaeron's steep,  
Pentheus and I,—for to my lord I clave,—  
And he who ushered us unto the scene  
First in a grassy dell we sat us down  
With footfall hushed and tongues refrained from  
speech,  
That so we might behold, all unbeheld 1050

There was a glen crag-walled, with rills o'erstreamed,  
Closed in with pine-shade, where the Maenad girls  
Sat with hands busied with their gladsome toils  
The faded thyrsus some with ivy-sprays  
Twined, till its tendrils tresses waved again  
Some, blithe as colts from carven wain-yokes loosed,  
Re-echoed each to each the Bacchic chant  
But hapless Pentheus, seeing not the throng  
Of women, spake thus " Stranger, where we stand,  
Are these mock-maenad maids beyond my ken 1060  
Some knoll or pine high-crested let me climb,  
And I shall see the Maenads' lewdness well "  
A marvel then I saw the stranger do  
A soaring pine-shaft by the top he caught,

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- κατῆγεν, ἦγεν, ἦγεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον  
κυκλοῦτο δ' ὥστε τόξον ἢ κυρτὸς τροχὸς  
τόρῳ γραφόμενος περιφορὰν ἔλκει δρόμον  
ὥς κλῶν' ὄρειον ὁ ξένος χεροῖν ἄγων  
ἔκαμπτεν εἰς γῆν, ἔργματ' οὐχὶ θνητὰ δρῶν  
1070 Πενθέα δ' ἰδρύσας ἐλατίνων ὄζων ἐπι,  
ὀρθὸν μεθίει διὰ χερῶν βλάστημ' ἄνω  
ἀτρέμα, φυλάσσων μὴ ἀναχαιτίσειέ νιν.  
ὀρθή δ' ἐς ὀρθὸν αἰθέρ' ἐστηρίζετο  
ἔχουσα νώτοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον  
ᾧφθη δὲ μάλλον ἢ κατεῖδε Μαινάδας  
ὅσον γὰρ οὐπω δῆλος ἦν θάσσων ἄνω,  
καὶ τὸν ξένον μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσορᾶν παρήν,  
ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνή τις, ὥς μὲν εἰκάσαι  
Διόνυσος, ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ νεάνιδες,  
1080 ἄγω τὸν ὑμᾶς καὶ μὲν τὰμά τ' ὄργια  
γέλων τιθέμενον ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθέ νιν  
καὶ ταῦθ' ἅμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν  
καὶ γαῖαν ἐστήριξε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός  
σίγησε δ' αἰθήρ, σῖγα δ' ὕλιμος νάπη  
φύλλ' εἶχε, θηρῶν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἤκουσας βοήν.  
αἱ δ' ὥσιν ἠχὴν οὐ σαφῶς δεδεδυμέναι  
ἔστησαν ὀρθαὶ καὶ διήνεγκαν κόρας.  
ὁ δ' αὐθις ἐπεκέλευσεν ὥς δ' ἐγνώρισαν  
σαφῇ κελευσμὸν Βακχίου Κάδμου κόραι,  
1090 ἦξαν πελείας ὠκύτητ' οὐχ ἥσσονες  
ποδῶν ἔχουσαι συντόνοις δρομήμασι,  
μήτηρ Ἀγαθή σύγγονοί θ' ὁμόσποροι  
πᾶσαι τε Βάκχαι διὰ δὲ χειμάρρου νάπης  
ἀγμῶν τ' ἐπήδων θεοῦ πνοαῖσιν ἐμμανεῖς  
ὥς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτῃ δεσπότην ἐφήμενον,  
πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταιβόλους

## THE BACCHANALS

And dragged down—down—still down to the dark  
earth

Arched as a bow it grew, or curving wheel  
That on the lathe sweeps out its circle's round  
So bowed the stranger's hands that mountain-stem,  
And bent to earth—a deed past mortal might '  
Then Pentheus on the pine boughs seated he 1070  
And let the trunk rise, sliding through his hands  
Gently, with heedful care to unseat him not  
Far up into the heights of air it soared,  
Bearing my master throned upon its crest,  
More by the Maenads seen than seeing them

For scarce high-lifted was he manifest,  
When lo, the stranger might no more be seen,  
And fell from heaven a voice—the voice, most like,  
Of Dionysus,—crying, “ O ye maids, 1080  
I bring him who would mock at you and me,  
And at my rites Take vengeance on him ye ! ”  
Even as he cried, up heavenward, down to earth,  
He flashed a pillar-splendour of awful flame  
Hushed was the welkin, all the forest-glade  
Held hushed its leaves, no wild thing's cry was heard  
But they, whose ears not clearly caught the sound,  
Sprang up, and shot keen glances right and left

Again he cried his hest then Cadmus' daughters  
Knew certainly the Bacchic God's command,  
And darted and the swiftness of their feet 1090  
Was as of doves in onward-straining race—  
His mother Agave and her sisters twain,  
And all the Bacchanals Through torrent gorge,  
O'er boulders, leapt they, with the God's breath mad.  
When seated on the pine they saw my lord,  
First torrent-stones with might and main they hurled,

- ἔρριπτον, ἀντίπυργον ἐπιβᾶσαι πέτραν,  
 ὄξοισί τ' ἐλατίνοισιν ἡκοντίζετο  
 1100 ἄλλαι δὲ θύρσους ἴεσαν δι' αἰθέρος  
 Πενθέως, στόχον δύστηνον· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦνυτον  
 κρεῖσσον γὰρ ὕψος τῆς προθυμίας ἔχων  
 καθήστο τλήμων, ἀπορία λελημμένος  
 τέλος δὲ δρυίνους συγκεραυνοῦσαι κλάδους,  
 ῥίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιδήροις μοχλοῖς  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθων τέρματ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον,  
 1110 ἔλεξ' Ἀγαυὴ φέρε, περιστᾶσαι κύκλω  
 πτόρθου λάβεσθε, Μαινάδες, τὸν ἀμβάτην  
 θῆρ' ὥς ἔλωμεν, μηδ' ἀπαγγείλῃ θεοῦ  
 χοροὺς κρυφαίους αἱ δὲ μυρίαν χέρα  
 προσέθεσαν ἐλάτῃ κᾶξανέσπασαν χθονός  
 ὑψοῦ δὲ θάσσων ὑψόθεν χαμαιπετῆς  
 πίπτει πρὸς οὐδας μυρίοις οἰμώγμασι  
 Πενθεύς· κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὦν ἐμάνθανε  
 πρώτη δὲ μήτηρ ἤρξεν ἱερία φόνου  
 καὶ προσπίτνει νιν· ὁ δὲ μίτραν κόμης ἀπο  
 ἔρριψεν, ὥς νιν γνωρίσασα μὴ κτάνοι  
 τλήμων Ἀγαυή, καὶ λέγει, παρηίδος  
 ψαύων ἐγώ τοι, μήτηρ, εἰμὶ παῖς σέθεν  
 1120 Πενθεύς, δν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος·  
 οἴκτειρε δ' ὦ μήτέρ με, μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς  
 ἀμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνῃς  
 ἢ δ' ἀφρὸν ἐξιῖσα καὶ διαστροφούς  
 κόρας ἐλίσσουσ', οὐ φρονοῦσ' ἃ χρὴ φρονεῖν,  
 ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχετ', οὐδ' ἔπειθέ νιν  
 λαβοῦσα δ' ὠλέναις ἀριστερὰν χέρα,  
 πλευραῖσιν ἀντιβᾶσα τοῦ δυσδαίμονος  
 ἀπεςπάραξεν ὦμον, οὐχ ὑπὸ σθένους,  
 ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς εὐμάρειαν ἐπεδίδου χεροῖν

## THE BACCHANALS

Scaling a rock, their counter-bastion,  
And javelined him with branches of the pine  
And others shot their thyrsi through the air  
At Pentheus—woeful mark!—yet nought availed 1100  
For, at a height above then fury's pitch,  
Tripped in despan's gin, horror-struck he sat  
Last, oak-limbs from their trunks they thundered  
down,

And heaved at the roots with levers—not of iron  
But when they won no end of toil and strain,  
Agave cried, "Ho, stand we round the trunk,  
Maenads, and grasp, that we may catch the beast  
Crouched there, that he may not proclaim abroad  
Our God's mysterious rites!" Their countless  
hands

Set they unto the pine, tore from the soil — 1110  
And he, high-seated, crashed down from his height,  
And earthward fell with frenzy of shriek on shriek  
Pentheus, for now he knew his doom at hand

His mother first, priest-like, began the slaughter,  
And fell on him but from his hair the coil  
He tore, that she might know and slay him not,—  
Hapless Agave!—and he touched her cheek,  
Crying, "'Tis I, O mother!—thine own son  
Pentheus—thou bar'st me in Echion's halls!  
Have mercy, O my mother!—for my sin 1120  
Murther not thou thy son—thy very son!"  
But she, with foaming lips and eyes that rolled  
Wildly, and reckless madness-clouded soul,  
Possessed of Bacchus, gave no heed to him,  
But his left arm she clutched in both her hands,  
And set against the wretch's ribs her foot,  
And tore his shoulder out—not by her strength,  
But the God made it easy to her hands.

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- 1130 Ἴνῳ δὲ τὰπὶ θάτερ' ἐξειργάζετο  
 ῥηγνύσα σάρκας, Αὐτονόη τ' ὄχλος τε πᾶς  
 ἐπείχε Βακχῶν· ἦν δὲ πᾶς' ὁμοῦ βοή,  
 ὁ μὲν στενάζων ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνέων,  
 αἱ δ' ἠλάλαζον ἔφερε δ' ἡ μὲν ὠλένην,  
 ἡ δ' ἶχνος αὐταῖς ἀρβύλαις· γυμνοῦντο δὲ  
 πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς πᾶσα δ' ἡματωμένη  
 χεῖρας διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως  
 κείται δὲ χωρὶς σῶμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλοις  
 πέτραις, τὸ δ' ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλῳ φόβῃ,  
 οὐ ῥάδιον ζήτημα κράτα δ' ἄθλιον,  
 1140 ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μῆτηρ χεροῖν,  
 πῆξας' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὡς ὀρεστέρου  
 φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρώνος μέσου,  
 λιποῦς' ἀδελφὰς ἐν χοροῖσι Μαινάδων  
 χωρεῖ δὲ θήρα δυσπότημῳ γαυρουμένη  
 τειχέων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον  
 τὸν ξυγκυναγόν, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας  
 τὸν καλλίνικον, ἧ δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ  
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῇδ' ἐκποδὼν τῇ ξυμφορᾷ  
 ἄπειμ', Ἀγαυὴν πρὶν μολεῖν πρὸς δῶματα.  
 1150 τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν  
 κάλλιστον οἶμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον  
 θνητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀναχορεύσωμεν Βάκχιον,  
 ἀναβοάσωμεν ξυμφορὰν  
 τὰν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐκγενέτα Πενθέως,  
 ὃς τὰν θηλυγενῆ στολὰν  
 νάρθηκά τε πιστὸν Ἄϊδαν  
 ἔλαβεν εὐθυρσον,  
 ταῦρον προηγητῆρα συμφορᾶς ἔχων



## THE BACCHANALS

And Ino liboured on the other side,  
 Rending his flesh Autonoe pressed on—all 1130  
 The Bacchanal throug One awful blended cry  
 Rose—the king's screams while life was yet in him,  
 And triumph-yells from them One bare an arm,  
 One a foot sandal-shod His ribs were stripped  
 In mangled shreds with blood-bedabbled hands  
 Each to and fro was tossing Pentheus' flesh

Wide-sundered lies his coise part 'neath rough  
 rocks,  
 Part mid the tangled depths of forest-shades —  
 Hard were the search His miserable head,  
 Which in her hands his mother chanced to seize, 1140  
 Impaled upon her thyrsus-point she bears,  
 Like mountain-lion's, through Cithæron's midst,  
 Leaving her sisters in then Maenad dance,  
 And, in her ghastly quarry gloying, comes  
 Within these walls, to Bacchus crying aloud,  
 Her fellow-hunter, helper in the chase  
 Triumphant—all its triumph-prize is tears!  
 But from this sight of misery will I  
 Depart, or ever Agave reach the halls  
 Ay, self-restraint, and reverence for the Gods 1150  
 Are best, I ween, 'tis wisest far for men  
 To get these in possession, and cleave thereto [*Exit*]

### CHORUS

Raise we to Bacchus the choral acclaim,  
 Shout we aloud for the fall  
 Of the king, of the blood of the Serpent who came,  
 Who arrayed him in woman's pall,  
 And the thyrsus-ferule he grasped—but the same  
 Sealed him to Hades' hall.  
 And a bull was his guide to a doom of shame!

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1160

Βάκχαι Καδμείαι,  
τὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπρίξατε  
εἰς γόον, εἰς δάκρυα  
καλὸς ἀγών, ἐν αἵματι στάζουσιν  
χέρα περιβαλεῖν τέκνον.

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ εἰς δόμους ὀρμωμένην  
Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐν διαστρόφοις  
ὄσσοις, δέχεσθε κῶμον εὐίου θεοῦ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Ἀσιάδες Βάκχαι

στρ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μ' ὀροθύνεις, ὦ ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1170

φέρομεν ἐξ ὀρέων  
ἔλिका νεότομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,  
μακάριον θήραν

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρῶ καί σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἔμαρψα τόνδ' ἄνευ βρόχων  
[λέοντος ἀγροτέρου] νέον ἱνιν,  
ὥς ὀρᾶν πάρα

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐρημίας ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Κιθαιρῶν—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κιθαιρῶν ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

κατεφόνευσέν νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἂ βαλοῦσα πρώτα ,

## THE BACCHANALS

O Bacchanal-maids Cadmean, 1160  
Ye have gained for you glory—a victory-pæan  
To be drowned in lamenting and weeping  
O contest triumphantly won, when a mother in blood  
of her son

Her fingers is steeping !  
But lo, I see fast hurrying to the halls  
Agave, Pentheus' mother, with wild eyes  
Rolling —hail ye the level of our God !  
*Enter AGAVE, carrying the head of Pentheus*

AGAVE  
Asian Bacchanals ! (Str )

CHORUS  
Why dost thou challenge me ?—say  
AGAVE  
Lo, from the mountain-side I bear  
A newly-severed ivy-spray 1170  
Unto our halls, a goodly prey

CHORUS  
I see—to our revels I welcome thee  
AGAVE  
I trapped him, I, with never a snare !  
'Tis the whelp of a desert lion, plain to see

CHORUS  
Where in the wilderness, where ?

AGAVE  
Cithaeron—  
CHORUS  
What hath Cithaeron wrought ?

AGAVE  
Him hath Cithaeron to slaughter brought

CHORUS  
Who was it smote him first ?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1180 μάκαιρ' Ἀγαύη κληζόμεθ' ἐν θιάσοις

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἄλλα,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τὰ Κάδμου—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κάδμου,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

γένεθλα

μετ' ἐμὲ μετ' ἐμὲ τοῦδ'  
ἔθιγε θηρός εὐτυχῆς γ' ἄδ' ἄγρα  
μέτεχέ νυν θοίνας

ἀντ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μετέχω τλάμων,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

νέος ὁ μύσχος ἄρ-  
τι γένυν ὑπὸ κόρυθ' ἱπαλύτριχα  
κατάκομον θίλλει

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρέπει γ' ὥστε θῆρ ἄγραυλος φόβη.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1190 ὁ Βάκχιος κυναγέτας  
σοφὸς σοφῶς ἀνέπηλεν ἐπὶ θήρα  
τοῦδε Μαινάδας

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἀγρεύς.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἐπαινεῖς,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ', ἐπαινῶ

## THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Mine, mine is the guerdon,  
Then level-out singeth me—"Happy Agave!" then  
burden 1180

CHORUS

Who then?

AGAVE

Of Cadmus—

CHORUS

Of Cadmus what wilt thou tell?

AGAVE

His daughters after me smote the monster fell—  
After me! O fortunate hunting! Is it not well?  
Now share in the banquet!— (Ant)

CHORUS

Alas! wherein shall I share?

AGAVE

This whelp is yet but a tender thing,  
And over its jaws yet sprouteth fan  
The down 'neath the crest of its waving hair

CHORUS

Yea, a beast of the wild, by the hair, might it be

AGAVE

Uprioused was the Maenad gathering  
To the chase by a cunning hunter full cunningly 1190

CHORUS

Yea, a hunter is Bacchus our King.

AGAVE

Dost thou praise me?

CHORUS

How can I choose but praise?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τάχα δὲ Καδμείοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ παῖς γε Πενθεὺς—

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ματέρ' ἐπαινέσεται,  
λαβοῦσαν ἄγραν τάνδε λεοντοφυή

ΧΟΡΟΣ

περισσάν

ΑΓΑΤΗ

περισσῶς

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγάλλει,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

γέγηθα

μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ  
φανερὰ τᾶδ' ἄγρᾳ κατειργασμένα

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200 δεῖξόν νυν, ὦ τάλαινα, σὴν νικηφόρον  
ἄστοῖσιν ἄγρᾳ ἣν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὦ καλλίπυργον ἄστρῳ Θηβαίας χθονὸς  
ναίοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὥς ἴδητε τήνδ' ἄγρᾳ,  
Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἣν ἡγρεύσαμεν  
οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν,  
οὐ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεσι  
χειρῶν ἀκμαῖσι κᾶτα κομπάζειν χρεῶν  
καὶ λογχοποιῶν ὄργανα κτᾶσθαι μάτην ;  
ἡμεῖς δέ γ' αὐτῇ χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἵλομεν

1210 χωρὶς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν.  
ποῦ μοι πατήρ ὁ πρέσβυς, ἐλθέτω πέλας.  
Πενθεὺς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποῦ'στιν, αἰρέσθω λαβὼν

## THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Ay, and full soon shall Cadmus' race—

CHORUS

And Pentheus thy son—

AGAVE

Yea, I shall have praise of my scion  
For the prey that is taken, even this whelp of a lion

CHORUS

Strange quarry!—

AGAVE

"And strangely taken

CHORUS

Art glad?

AGAVE

I am fain  
For the triumph achieved, both goodly and great,  
and plain [ta'en  
For the land to see, in the booty mine hands have

CHORUS

Show forth now, hapless one, to all the folk 1200  
The triumph-spoil that hither thou hast brought

AGAVE

Ye, in the faw-towered burg of Theban land  
Which dwell, draw nigh to look upon this prey,  
The beast we, Cadmus' daughters, hunted down—  
Not with the thong-whined darts of Thessaly,  
Neither with nets, but with the fingers white  
Of our own hands What boots the vaunt of men  
Who get them tools by armourers vainly wrought,  
When we, with bare hands only, took the prey,  
And rent asunder all the monster's limbs? 1210  
Where is mine ancient sire? Let him draw near  
And my son Pentheus where? Let him upraise

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πηκτῶν πρὸς οἴκους κλιμάκων προσαμβύσεις,  
ὥς πασσαλεύσῃ κρᾶτα τριγλύφοις τόδε  
λέοντος ὃν πάρειμι θηράσας' ἐγὼ

### ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔπεσθέ μοι, φέροντες ἄθλιον βάρος  
Πενθέως, ἔπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, δόμων πάρος,  
οὐ σῶμα μοχθῶν μυρίοις ζητήμασι  
1220 φέρω τόδ', εὐρὼν ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς  
διασπαρακτόν, κοῦδὲν ἐν ταύτῳ πέδῳ  
λαβών, ἐν ὕλῃ κείμενον δυσευρέτῳ  
ἤκουσα γάρ του θυγατέρων τολμήματα,  
ἤδη κατ' ἄστυ τειχέων ἔσω βεβῶς  
σὺν τῷ γέροντι Τειρεσίᾳ Βακχῶν πάρα  
πάλιν δὲ κάμψας εἰς ὄρος κομίζομαι  
τὸν κατθανόντα παῖδα Μαινάδων ὑπο  
καὶ τὴν μὲν Ἀκταίων' Ἀρισταίῳ ποτὲ  
τεκούσαν εἶδον Αὐτονόῃν Ἰνώ θ' ἅμα  
1230 ἔτ' ἀμφὶ δρυμοῖς οἰστροπλήγας ἀθλίας,  
τὴν δ' εἶπέ τίς μοι δεῦρο βακχείῳ ποδὶ  
στείχειν Ἀγαύην, οὐδ' ἄκραντ' ἠκούσαμεν  
λεύσσω γὰρ αὐτήν, ὅψιν οὐκ εὐδαίμονα

### ΑΓΑΤΗ

πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστι σοι,  
πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπείραι μακρῷ  
θηγτῶν ἀπάσας εἶπον, ἐξόχως δ' ἐμέ,  
ἢ τὰς παρ' ἱστοῖς ἐκλιπούσα κερκίδας  
εἰς μείζον ἤκω, θήρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν  
φέρω δ' ἐν ὠλέναισιν, ὥς ὀρᾷς, τὰδε  
λαβοῦσα τᾶριστέῖα, σοῖσι πρὸς δόμοις  
1240 ὥς ἀγκρεμασθῇ σὺν δέ, πάτερ, δέξαι χερσὶν  
γαυρούμενος δὲ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀγρεύμασι



## THE BACCHANALS

A ladder's stan against the palace-wall,  
That to the triglyphs he may nail this head,  
This lion's head that I from hunting bring

*Enter CADMUS, with attendants carrying a bier*

### CADMUS

Come with me, henchmen, to the palace come,  
Beating this ghastly load that once was Pentheus  
Whose limbs by toilsome searchings manifold,  
About Cithaeron's glens all rent apart  
I found, and bring—no twain in one place found, 1220  
But lying all about the trackless wood  
For of my daughters' desperate deeds I heard,  
Even as I passed within the city-walls  
With old Teiresias from the Bacchant revel  
Back to the mountain turned I, and I bring  
My son thence, who by Maenads hath been slain  
There he who bore Actaeon to Aristaeus  
I saw, Autonoe, saw Ino there  
Still midst the oak-groves, wretches frenzy-stung,  
But hitherward, said one, with Bacchant feet 1230  
Had passed Agave, and the truth I heard;  
For I behold her—sight of misery!

### AGAVE

My father, proudest boast is thine to make,  
To have begotten daughters best by far  
Of mortals—all thy daughters, chiefly me,  
Me who left loom and shuttle, and pressed on  
To high emprise, to hunt beasts with mine hands  
And in mine arms I bring, thou seest, this  
The prize I took, against thy palace-wall  
• To hang receive it, father, in thine hands 1240  
And now, triumphant in mine hunting's spoil,

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κάλει φίλους εἰς δαῖτα μακάριος γὰρ εἶ,  
μακάριος, ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἐξειργασμένων

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὦ πένθος οὐ μετρητὸν οὐδ' οἶόν τ' ἰδεῖν,  
φόνον ταλαίναις χερσὶν ἐξειργασμένων  
καλὸν τὸ θῦμα καταβαλοῦσα δαίμοσιν  
ἐπὶ δαῖτα Θήβας τάσδε κἀμὲ παρακαλεῖς  
οἴμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σῶν, ἔπειτ' ἐμῶν  
ὥς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μὲν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν  
Βρόμιος ἄναξ ἀπάλεσ' οἰκείος γεγώς

1250

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὥς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώποις ἔφν  
ἐν τ' ὄμμασι σκυθρωπὸν εἶθε παῖς ἐμὸς  
εὐθνηρος εἶη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόποις,  
ὅτ' ἐν νεανίαισι Θηβαίοις ἅμα  
θηρῶν ὀριγυῶτ' ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον  
οἶός τ' ἐκείνος, νουθετητέος, πάτερ,  
σοῦστίην τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἂν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμὴν  
καλέσειεν, ὥς ἴδῃ με τὴν εὐδαίμονα ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· φρονήσασαι μὲν οἶ' ἐδράσατε,  
ἀλγήσεται ἄλγος δεινόν· εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους  
ἐν τῷδ' αἰὲ μενεῖτ' ἐν ᾧ καθέστατε,  
οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ' οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν

1260

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τί δ' οὐ καλῶς τῶνδ', ἦ τί λυπηρῶς ἔχει ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τόνδ' αἰθέρ' ὄμμα σὸν μέθες

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἰδού· τί μοι τόνδ' ἐξυπείπας εἰσορᾶν ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔθ' αὐτὸς ἢ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχειν δοκεῖ ,

## THE BACCHANALS

Bid to a feast thy friends , for blest art thou,  
Blest verily, since we have achieved such deeds

CADMUS

O anguish measureless that blasts the sight !  
O murder compassed by those wretched hands !  
Fair victim this to cast before the Gods,  
And bid to such a banquet Thebes and me !  
Woe for our sorrows !—first for thine, then mine !  
How hath the God, King Bromius, ruined us !—  
Just stroke—yet ruthless—is he not our kin ? 1250

AGAVE

How soui of mood is greybeard eld in men,  
How sullen-eyed ! Framed in his mother's mould  
A mighty hunter may my son become,  
When with the Theban youths he speedeth forth  
Questing the quarry ! But he can do naught  
Save war with Gods ! Father, thy part it is  
To warn him Who will call him hitherward  
To see me, and behold mine happiness ?

CADMUS

Alas ! when ye are ware what ye have done,  
With sore grief shall ye grieve ! If to life's end 1260  
Ye should in this delusion still abide,  
Ye should not, though unblest, seem all accurst

AGAVE

What is not well here ?—what that calls for grief ?

CADMUS

First cast thou up thine eye to yonder heaven

AGAVE

Lo, so I do Why bid me look thereon ?

CADMUS

Seems it the same ? Or hath it changed to thee ?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λαμπρότερος ἢ πρὶν καὶ διυπετέστερος.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῇ ψυχῇ πάρα ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

οὐκ οἶδα τοῦπος τοῦτο, γίγνομαι δέ πως  
ἔννους, μετασταθεῖσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν.

1270

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κλύοις ἂν οὖν τι κάποκρίναι' ἂν σαφῶς ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὥς ἐκλέλησμαι γ' ἂ πάρος εἵπομεν, πάτερ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

εἰς ποῖον ἦλθες οἶκον ὑμεναίων μέτα ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

σπαρτῷ μ' ἔδωκας, ὥς λέγουσ', Ἐχίονι

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις παῖς ἐγένετο σὺ πόσει ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πειθεύς, ἐμῇ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνίᾳ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέοντος, ὥς γ' ἔφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σκέψαι νυν ὀρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἔα, τί λεύσσω , τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χεροῖν ,

1280

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἄθρησοι αὐτὸ καὶ σαφέστερον μᾶθι

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὁρῶ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ

## THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Brighter—more hmpid-lucent than erewhile

CADMUS

Is this delirium tossing yet thy soul ?

AGAVE

This comprehend I not yet—yet—it passes,  
My late mood—I am coming to myself

1270

CADMUS

Canst hearken aught then ? Clearly canst reply ?

AGAVE

Our words late-spoken—father, I forget them

CADMUS

To what house camest thou with bridal-hymns ?

AGAVE

Echion's—of the Dragon-seed, men say

CADMUS

Thou barest—in thine halls, to thy lord—whom ?

AGAVE

Pentheus—born of my union with his sue

CADMUS

Whose head—*whose* ?—art thou bearing in thine arms ?

AGAVE

A lion's—so said they which hunted it

CADMUS

Look well thereon —small trouble this, to look

AGAVE

Ah-h ! *what* do I see ? What bear I in mine hands ? 1280

CADMUS

Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.

AGAVE

I see—mine uttermost anguish ! Woe is me !

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

οὐκ· ἀλλὰ Πενθέως ἡ τάλαιν' ἔχω κára.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ῥμωγμένον γε πρόσθεν ἡ σὲ γνωρίσαι

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τίς ἔκτανέν νιν ; πῶς ἐμὰς ἦλθεν χέρας ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

δύστην' ἀλήθει', ὥς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέγ', ὥς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πῆδημ' ἔχει

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σύ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγνηται σέθεν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1290

ποῦ δ' ὤλετ', ἡ κατ' οἶκον ; ἡ ποίοις τόποις ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαχον κύνες.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἦλθε δυσδαίμων ὅδε ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐκερτόμει θεὸν σὰς τε βακχείας μολῶν

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκείσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐμάνητε, πᾶσά τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλεις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὑβριν γ' ὑβρισθείς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἡγεῖσθέ νιν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τὸ φίλτατον δὲ σῶμα ποῦ παιδός, πάτερ ,

## THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Seems it to thee now like a lion's head ?

AGAVE

No!—wretched!—wretched!—Pentheus' head I hold!

CADMUS

Of me bewailed ere recognised of thee

AGAVE

Who murdered him ? How came he to mine hands ?

CADMUS

O piteous truth that so untimely dawns !

AGAVE

Speak ! Hard my heart beats, waiting for its doom

CADMUS

Thou !—thou, and those thy sisters murdered him

AGAVE

Where perished he ?—at home, or in what place ?

CADMUS

There, where Actaeon erst by hounds was torn

AGAVE

How to Cithaeron went this hapless one ?

CADMUS

To mock the God and thy wild rites he went

AGAVE

But we—for what cause thither journeyed we ?

CADMUS

Ye were distraught all Thebes went Bacchant-wild

AGAVE

Dionysus ruined us ! I see it now

CADMUS

Ye flouted him, would not believe him God

AGAVE

Where, father, is my son's beloved corse ?

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ μύλῃς τὸδ' ἐξερευνίσας φέρω

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1300

ἥ πᾶν ἐν ἄρθροῖς συγκεκλημένον καλῶς ,

\* \*

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεὶ δὲ τί μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσήκ' ἐμῆς ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὕμῃν ἐγένεθ' ὅμοιος, οὐ σέβων θεόν  
τοιγὰρ συνῆψε πάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην,  
ὕμᾱς τε τόνδε θ', ὥστε διολέσαι δόμους  
καῶν, ὅστις ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγώς,

τῆς σῆς τὸδ' ἔρνος, ὦ τάλαινα, νηδύος  
αἰσχίστα καὶ κάκιστα κατθανόνθ' ὀρώ,  
ὦ δῶμ' ἀνέβλεφ', ὃς συνεῖχες, ὦ τέκνον,  
τοῦμόν μέλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς,

1310

πόλει τε τάρβος ἦσθα τὸν γέροντα δὲ  
οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἤθελ' εἰσορῶν τὸ σὸν  
κάρα· δίκην γὰρ ἀξίαν ἐλάμβανες  
νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβεβλήσομαι  
ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὃς τὸ Θηβαίων γένος  
ἔσπειρα καὶ ξήμησα κάλλιστον θέρος  
ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ὢν ὁμῶς  
τῶν φιλότατων ἔμοιγ' ἀριθμήσει, τέκνον,  
οὐκέτι γενείου τοῦδε θιγγάνων χερί,

·1320

τὸν μητρὸς αὐδῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνον,  
λέγων τίς ἀδικεῖ, τίς σ' ἀτιμάζει, γέρον,  
τίς σὴν ταρασσει καρδίαν λυπηρὸς ὢν,  
λέγ', ὥς κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοῦντά σ', ὦ πάτερ.  
νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ' ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σύ,  
οἰκτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλήμιονες δὲ σύγγονοι.



## THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Here do I bear it, by hard searching found

AGAVE

Is it all meetly fitted limb to limb ?

1300

CADMUS

[Yea,—now I add thereto this dear-loved head ]

AGAVE

But—in my folly what was Pentheus' part ?

CADMUS

He was as ye, revering not the God,  
Who therefore in one mischief whelmed you all,  
You, and this prince, so ruining all our house  
And me, who had no manchild of mine own,  
Who see now, wretched daughter, this the fruit  
Of thy womb horribly and foully slain  
To thee our house looked up, O son, the stay  
Of mine old halls, my daughter's offspring thou,  
Thou wast the city's dread—was none dared mock 1310  
The old man, none that turned his eyes on thee,  
O gallant head !—thou hadst well requited him

Now from mine halls shall I in shame be cast—  
Cadmus the great, who sowed the seed of Thebes,  
And reaped the goodliest harvest of the world  
O best-beloved !—for, though thou be no more,  
Thou shalt be counted best-beloved, O child,  
Thou who shalt fondle never more my head,  
Nor clasp and call me “Mother's father,” child,  
Crying, “Who wrongs thee, ancient ?—flouts thee  
who ?” 1320

Who vexeth thee to trouble thine heart's peace ?  
Speak, that I may chastise the wrong, my sire ”  
Now am I anguish-stricken, wretched thou,  
Woeful thy mother, and her sisters wretched !

## BAKXAI

εἰ δ' ἔστιν ὅστις δαιμόνων ὑπερφρονεῖ,  
εἰς τοῦδ' ἀθρήσας θάνατον ἡγείσθω θεοῦς.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸ μὲν σὸν ἀλγῶ, Κᾶδμε· σὸς δ' ἔχει δίκην  
παῖς παιδὸς ἀξίαν μὲν, ἀλγεινὴν δὲ σοί

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ὁρᾷς γὰρ τᾶμ' ὅσῳ μετεστράφη

[illegible]

## ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

1   \*   3   4   5   6   7   8   9  
 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9

1330 δράκων γενήσῃ μεταβαλὼν, δάμαρ τε σὴ  
ἐκθηριωθείς· ὄφεος ἀλλάξει τύπον,  
ἦν Ἄρεος ἔσχες Ἀρμονίαν θνητὸς γεγώς,  
ὄχον δὲ μόσχων, χρησμὸς ὥς λέγει Διὸς,  
ἐλᾷς μετ' ἀλόχου, βαρβάρων ἡγούμενος  
πολλὰς δὲ πέρσεις ἀναρίθμῳ στρατεύματι  
πόλεις ὅταν δὲ Λοξίου χρηστήριον  
διαρπάσωσι, νόστον ἄθλιον πάλιν  
στήσουσι σὲ δ' Ἄρης Ἀρμονίαν τε ρύσεται  
μακάρων τ' ἐς αἶαν σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον  
1340 ταύτ' οὐχὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγὼς λέγω  
Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνὸς εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν  
ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἠθέλετε, τὸν Διὸς γόνον  
ἠυδαιμονεῖτ' ἂν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι

## THE BACCHANALS

If any man there be that scorns the Gods,  
This man's death let him note, and so believe

### CHORUS

Cadmus, for thee I grieve Thy daughter's son  
Hath but just doom—yet cruel doom for thee

### AGAVE

Father, thou seest what change hath passed o'er  
me—

[A large portion of the play has here been lost, containing (1) the lament of Agave over her son; (2) a few lines, probably by the Chorus, announcing the appearance, in his shape as a God, of Dionysus, (3) the commencement of Dionysus' speech, in which he points out how Pentheus' sin has proved his destruction, how Agave and her sisters have, by their unbelief, involved themselves in his punishment, and will be exiles till death, and how Cadmus himself must suffer with his house, how he shall wander exiled from Hellas,—the portion preserved commencing with the prophecy of his weird transformation ]<sup>1</sup>

### DIONYSUS

—Thou to a serpent shalt be changed thy wife  
Harmonia, Ares' child, whom thou didst wed  
When man, embruted shall to a snake be changed  
Thou with thy wife shalt drive a wain of steers  
Leading barbaric hordes, Zeus' oracle saith,  
And many a city with thy countless host  
Shalt sack, but when they plunder Loxias' shrine,  
Then shall they get them bitter home-return  
Thee and Harmonia shall Ares save,  
And stablish in the Blessed Land your lives  
Thus say I, of no mortal father born,  
Dionysus, but of Zeus Had ye but learnt  
Wisdom, what time ye would not, ye had been  
Blest now, with Zeus' Son for your champion gained

<sup>1</sup> For preserved fragments of this lost portion, see *Appendix*

# ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσσε, λισσόμεσθ' ἄ σ', ἡδίκηκαμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὄψ' ἐμάθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἐχρήην, οὐκ ἤδετε.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λίαν

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς γεγὼς ὑβριζόμεν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὀργὰς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς οὐμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατὴρ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1350 αἰαῖ, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τλήμονες φυγαί.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τί δῆτα μέλλεθ' ἄπερ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, ὥς εἰς δεινὸν ἦλθομεν κακόν,  
[πάντες], σύ θ' ἡ τάλαινα σύγγονοί τε σαί,  
ἐγὼ θ' ὁ τλήμων βαρβάρους ἀφίξομαι  
γέρον μέτοικος· ἔτι δέ μοι τὸ θέσφατον  
εἰς Ἑλλάδ' ἀγαγεῖν μιγάδα βάρβαρον στρατόν.  
καὶ τὴν Ἀρεως παῖδ' Ἀρμονίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμήν,  
δράκων δρακαίνης φύσιν ἔχουσιν ἀγρίαν  
ἄξω πλὶ βωμοὺς καὶ τάφους Ἑλληνικοὺς,  
1360 ἡγούμενος λόγχαισιν οὐδὲ παύσομαι  
κακῶν ὁ τλήμων, οὐδὲ τὸν καταιβάτην  
Ἀχέροντα πλεύσας ἥσυχος γενήσομαι.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι

## THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Dionysus, we beseech thee!—we have sinned

DIONYSUS

Too late ye know me, who knew not in your hour

AGAVE

We know it but thy vengeance passeth bounds

DIONYSUS

I am a God. ye did despite to me

AGAVE

It fits not that in wrath Gods be as men

DIONYSUS

Long since my father Zeus ordained this so

AGAVE

Alas! our woeful exile's doom is sealed!

DIONYSUS

Why then delay the fate that needs must be? [*Exit*

CADMUS

Daughter, to what dread misery are we come,—

Yea, all, thou and thy sisters—woe is thee?

And I—ah me!—must visit alien men,

A grey-haired sojourner I am doomed withal

On Greeks to lead a mingled alien host,

And Ares' child, Harmonia my wife,

In serpent form shall I, a serpent, lead

Against our Hellas' altars and her tombs,

Captaining spears. And I shall find no rest

From woes, alas! nor that down-rushing stream

Of Acheron shall I cross and be at peace!

AGAVE

Robbed of thee, father, exiled shall I be!

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τί μ' ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσίν, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ,  
ὄρνιν ὅπως κηφῆνα πολιοῦχως κύκνος ,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη ,

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνον· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

χαῖρ', ὦ μέλαθρον, χαῖρ', ὦ πατρία  
πόλις ἐκλείπω σ' ἐπὶ δυστυχίᾳ  
φυγὰς ἐκ θαλάμων.

1370

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

στεῖχέ νυν, ὦ παῖ, τὸν Ἀρισταίου

x \* \* \* x \* \*

ΑΓΑΤΗ

στένομαί σε, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

καὶ σὰς ἐδάκρυσα κασιγνήτας  
καὶ γὰρ ἐπασχεν δεινὰ πρὸς ὑμῶν,

ΑΓΑΤΗ

δεινῶς γὰρ τάνδ' αἰκίαν  
Διόνυσος ἄναξ  
τοὺς σοὺς εἰς οἴκους ἔφερεν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἔπασχεν δεινὰ πρὸς ὑμῶν,  
ἀγέραςτον ἔχων ὄνομ' ἐν Θήβαις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ μελέα  
θύγατερ. χαλεπῶς εἰς τόδ' ἂν ἤκοις.

1380

## THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Why cast thine arms about me, hapless child ?  
Like white swan cherishing its helpless sire ?

AGAVE

Whither can I turn, outcast from my land ?

CADMUS

I know not, child    Small help thy father is

AGAVE

Farewell, mine home, farewell, ye city-towers  
Of fatherland ! In anguish of despair  
I pass an exile from my bridal bowers

CADMUS

Child, to the halls of Aristaeus fare  
Abide thou there

AGAVE

I mourn thee, father !

CADMUS

Child, I mourn for thee,  
And for thy sisters do I weep withal

AGAVE

For Dionysus' tyrannous majesty  
Most fearfully hath caused upon thine hall  
This shame to fall

CADMUS

Yea, outrage foul to him of you was done,  
In that his name in Thebes was held in scorn

AGAVE

Farewell, my father

CADMUS

Farewell, hapless one,  
Who ne'er shalt fare well, evermore forlorn !

## ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

### ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἄγετ' ὦ πομποί με, κασιγνήτας  
ἵνα συμφυγάδας ληψόμεθ' οἰκτράς  
ἔλθοιμι δ' ὅπου  
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν μιάρος μ' ἐσίδοι,  
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν' ὅσσοισιν ἐγώ,  
μήθ' ὅθι θύρσου μνήμ' ἀνάκειται·  
Βάκχαις δ' ἄλλαισι μέλοιεν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,  
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί  
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,  
τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἡὔρε θεός.  
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα

1390



## THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

O ye, to my sisters guide me,  
My companions in banishment's misery  
O that afar I might hide me  
Where accursèd Cithaeron shall look not on me,  
Nor I with mine eyes shall Cithaeron see,  
Where memorial is none of the thyrsus-spear!  
Be these unto other Bacchanals dear

CHORUS

O the works of the Gods—in manifold wise they  
reveal them.

Manifold things unhopèd-for the Gods to accom-  
plishment bring

And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign  
not to fulfil them,

And the paths undisceined of our eyes, the Gods un-  
seal them

1390

So fell this marvellous thing

[*Exeunt OMNES*]

## APPENDIX TO THE "BACCHANALS"

A FEW fragments, given below, of the lost portion of the *Bacchæ* have been collected, chiefly from the *Christus Patiens*, "a wretchedly stupid drama, falsely attributed to Gregory Nazianzenus, giving an account of the circumstances connected with the Passion of Christ, and consisting of a cento of verses taken chiefly from the *Bacchæ*, *Rhesus*, and *Thæades*" (Tyrrell, introduction to his edition of the *Bacchæ*)

The lines marked *A* may be taken as from the speech of Agave; those marked *D*, as from that of Dionysus

*A* To find a doom of rending midst the rocks

What corpse is this that in mine arms I clasp '  
How shall I press him—woes me '—tenderly  
Unto my breast?—in what wise wail o'er him?

For, had mine hands received not mine own curse

To rend to utter fragments every limb

Kissing the shreds of flesh which once I nursed

Come, ancient, this thrice-hapless sufferer's head  
Compose we reverently, and all the frame  
Lay we together, far as in us lies  
O best-belovèd face, O youthful cheek  
Lo, with this vesture do I veil thine head,  
And these thy blood-bedabbled, furrow scarred  
Limbs

Whose is the mantle that shall shroud thy form  
Ah, whose the hands that now shall tend thee, son?

<sup>1</sup> From Lucian

<sup>2</sup> From the Scholiast to Aristophanes' *Plutus*

## APPENDIX

*D* He dared the chain, he dared the scoffing word  
They which should have been last to slay him, slew  
All this hath yon man suffered righteously  
Yea, and the nation's doom I will not hide—  
To leave yon town, a sign to alien men,  
To pass to many cities wandering,  
Dragging a yoke of thralldom woefully,  
War-captives, draining misery's cup to the dregs  
Yea, they must leave this city, expiate  
The impious pollution of his murder,  
And see no more their own land—God forbid  
That murderers by their victims' graves should lie !  
All woes thou too must suffer will I tell,



THE  
MADNESS OF HERCULES



## ARGUMENT

*Hercules was hated from his birth by Hera, and by her devices was made subject to Eurystheus, king of Argos. At his command he performed the great Twelve Labours, whereof the last was that he should bring up Cerberus, the Hound of Hades, from the Underworld. Ere he departed, he committed Amphitryon his father, with Megara his wife, and his sons, to the keeping of Creon, king of Thebes, and so went down into the Land of Darkness. Now when he was long time absent, so that men doubted whether he would ever return, a man of Euboea, named Lycus, was brought into Thebes by evil-hearted and discontented men, and with these conspired against Creon, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. Then he sought further to slay all that remained of the house of Hercules, lest any should in days to come avenge Creon's murder. So these, in their sore strait, took refuge at the altar of Zeus. And herein is told how, even as they stood under the shadow of death, Hercules returned for their deliverance, and how in the midst of that joy and triumph a yet worse calamity was brought upon them by the malice of Hera.*

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

ΛΥΣΣΑ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AMPHITRYON, husband of Alcmena, and reputed father of Hercules

MEGARA, wife of Hercules

LYCUS, a usurper, king of Thebes

HERCULES, son of *Zeus* and *Alcmena*

IRIS, a Goddess, messenger of the Gods.

MADNESS, *a demon*

SERVANT of *Hercules*

THESEUS, *king of Athens*

CHORUS, consisting of Theban Elders

*Three young Sons of Hercules, Attendants of Lycus and of Theseus*

SCENE    At Thebes, before the royal palace      The altar of  
                Zeus stands in front.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

Τίς τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον οὐκ οἶδεν βροτῶν,  
'Αργεῖον 'Αμφιτρυῶν', δν 'Αλκαῖός ποτε  
ἔτιχθ' ὁ Περσέως, πατέρα τόνδ' 'Ηρακλέους ;  
δς τάσδε Θήβας ἔσχεν, ἔνθ' ὁ γηγενὴς  
σπαρτῶν στάχυσ ἔβλασται, ὧν γένους 'Αρης  
ἔσωσ' ἀριθμὸν ὀλίγον, οἱ Κάδμου πόλιν  
τεκνοῦσι παίδων παισὶν ἔνθεν ἐξέφυ  
Κρέων Μενοικέως παῖς, ἀναξ τῇσδε χθονός  
Κρέων δὲ Μεγάρας τῇσδε γίγνεται πατήρ,  
10 ἦν πάντες ὑμεναίοισι Καδμεῖοί ποτε  
λωτῶ συνηλάλαξαν, ἡνίκ' εἰς ἔμοις  
δόμοις ὁ κλεινὸς 'Ηρακλῆς νιν ἤγετο  
λιπῶν δὲ Θήβας, οὗ κατωκίσθη ἐγώ,  
Μεγάραν τε τήνδε πενθερούς τε παῖς ἔμοις  
'Αργεῖα τείχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν  
ᾠρέξατ' οἰκεῖν, ἦν ἐγὼ φεύγω κτανῶν  
'Ηλεκτρυῶνα· συμφορὰς δὲ τὰς ἐμὰς  
ἐξευμαρίζων καὶ πάτραν οἰκεῖν θέλων,  
καθόδου δίδωσι μισθὸν Εὐρυσθεῖ μέγαν,  
20 ἐξημερῶσαι γαῖαν, εἴθ' 'Ηρας ὕπο  
κέντροις δαμασθεῖς εἴτε τοῦ χρεῶν μέτα.  
καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνοις,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

*AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and her three Sons by Hercules,  
seated on the steps of the altar of Zeus the Deliverer*

### AMPHITRYON

Who knows not Zeus's couch-mate, who of men,  
Argive Amphitryon, sprung from Peiseus' son  
Alcaeus, father of great Hercules ?  
Here in Thebes dwelt he, whence the earth-born  
    crop  
Of Sown Men rose, scant remnant of whose race  
The War-god spared to people Cadmus' town  
With children of their children   Sprang from these  
Creon, Menoeceus' son, king of this land,  
Creon, the father of this Megara,  
Whose spousals all the sons of Cadmus once                   10  
Acclaimed with flutes, what time unto mine halls  
Glorious Hercules brought home his bride  
But Thebes, wherein I dwelt, and Megara,  
And all his marriage-kin, my son forsook,  
Yearning for Argos' giant-builed burg  
Mycenae, whence I am outlawed, since I slew  
Electryon   he, to lighten mine affliction,  
And fain to dwell in his own fatherland,  
Proffered Eurystheus for our home-return—  
On spurred by Hera's goads, or drawn by fate—                   20  
A great price, even to rid the earth of pests  
And, all the other labours now achieved,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ Ταινάρου διὰ στόμα  
 βέβηκε' εἰς "Αἶδου τὸν τρισώματον κύνα  
 εἰς φῶς ἀνάξων, ἔνθεν οὐχ ἦκει πάλιν  
 γέρων δὲ δὴ τις ἔστι Καδμείων λόγος  
 ὡς ἦν πάρος Δίρκης τις εὐνήτωρ Λύκος  
 τὴν ἐπτάπυργον τήνδε δεσπόζων πόλιν,  
 τῷ λευκοπῶλῳ πρὶν τυραννῆσαι χθονὸς  
 30 Ἀμφίον' ἠδὲ Ζῆθον, ἐκγόνῳ Διὸς  
 οὐ ταῦτ' ὄνομα παῖς πατρὸς κεκλημένος,  
 Καδμείος οὐκ ὦν, ἀλλ' ἀπ' Εὐβοίας μολῶν,  
 κτείνει Κρέοντα καὶ κτανὼν ἄρχει χθονός,  
 στάσει νοσοῦσαν τήνδ' ἐπεισπесῶν πόλιν  
 ἡμῖν δὲ κῆδος εἰς Κρέοντ' ἀνημμένον  
 κακὸν μέγιστον, ὡς ἔοικε, γίγνεται  
 τοῦμοῦ γὰρ ὄντος παιδὸς ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς  
 ὁ καινὸς οὗτος τῆσδε γῆς ἄρχων Λύκος  
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελεῖν θέλει  
 40 κτανὼν δάμαρτά θ', ὡς φόνῳ σβέσῃ φόνον,  
 κᾶμ'—εἴ τι δὴ χρὴ κᾶμ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν λέγειν  
 γέροντ' ἀχρεῖον—μὴ ποθ' οἶδ' ἠνδρωμένοι  
 μήτρῳσιν ἐκπράξωσιν αἵματος δίκην  
 ἐγὼ δέ—λείπει γάρ με τοῖσδ' ἐν δώμασι  
 τροφὸν τέκνων οἰκουρόν, ἡνίκα χθονὸς  
 μέλαιναν ὄρφνην εἰσέβαινε παῖς ἐμός—  
 σὺν μητρὶ, τέκνα μὴ θάνωσ' Ἑρακλέους,  
 βωμόν καθίζω τόνδε σωτήρος Διὸς,  
 ὃν καλλινίκου δορὸς ἄγαλμ' ἰδρύσατο  
 50 Μινύας κρατήσας οὐμός εὐγενῆς τόκος  
 πάντων δὲ χρεῖοι τάσδ' ἔδρας φυλάσσομεν,  
 σίτων ποτῶν ἐσθῆτος, ἀστρώτῳ πέδῳ  
 πλευρὰς τιθέντες· ἐκ γὰρ ἐσφραγισμένοι  
 δόμων καθήμεθ' ἀπορίᾳ σωτηρίας.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

For the last, down the gorge of Taenarus  
He hath passed to Hades, to bring up to light  
The hound three-headed, whence he hath not re-  
turned

Now an old legend lives mid Cadmus' sons  
That erstwhile was one Lycus Dince's spouse,  
And of this seven-gated city king,  
Ere Zethus and Amphion ruled the land,  
Lords of the White Steeds, sprung from loins of Zeus  
And this man's son, who bears his father's name,—  
No Theban, an Euboean outlander,—  
Fell on the city by sedition rent,  
Slew Creon, and having slain him rules the land  
And mine affinity with Creon knit  
Is turned to mighty evil, well I wot  
For while my son is in the earth's dark heart,  
This upstart Lycus, ruler of the land,  
Would fain destroy the sons of Hercules,  
And slay, with blood to smother blood, his wife  
And me,—if I be reckoned among men,  
A useless greybeard,—lest these, grown to man,  
Take vengeance for their mother's father's blood

And I—for my son left me in his halls  
To ward his sons and foster them, when he  
Into the earth's black nether darkness passed—  
Here with their mother sit, that Hercules' sons  
May die not, at the altar of Saviour Zeus,  
Which, in thanksgiving for the victory won  
O'er Minyan foes, mine hero-son reared  
And, lacking all things, raiment, meat, and drink,  
Here keep we session, on the bare hard ground  
Laying our limbs, for desperate of life  
Here sit we, barred from homes whose doors are sealed

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φίλων δὲ τοὺς μὲν οὐ σαφεῖς ὁρῶ φίλους,  
οἱ δ' ὄντες ὀρθῶς ἀδύνατοι προσωφελεῖν  
τοιούτον ἀνθρώποισιν ἢ δυσπραξία,  
ἣς μήποθ' ὅστις καὶ μέσως εὖνους ἐμοὶ  
τύχοι, φίλων ἔλεγχον ἀψευδέστατον

### ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

- 60 ὦ πρέσβυ, Ταφίων ὃς ποτ' ἐξείλες πόλιν  
στρατηλατήσας κλεινὰ Καδμείων δορός,  
ὥς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποισι τῶν θείων σαφές  
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐτ' εἰς πατέρ' ἀπηλάθην τύχης,  
ὃς εἵνεκ' ὄλβου μέγας ἐκομπάσθη ποτέ,  
ἔχων τυραννίδ', ἣς μακρὰι λόγchai πέρα  
πηδῶσ' ἔρωτι σώματ' εἰς εὐδαίμονα,  
ἔχων δὲ τέκνα καὶ μ' ἔδωκε παιδί σῶ  
ἐπίσημον εὐνήν Ἡρακλεῖ συνοικίσας  
καὶ νῦν ἐκεῖνα μὲν θανόντ' ἀνέπτατο
- 70 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ σὺ μέλλομεν θνήσκειν, γέρον,  
οἷ θ' Ἡράκλειοι παῖδες, οὓς ὑπὸ πτεροῖς  
σώζω νεοσσούς ὄρνις ὡς ὑφειμένους  
οἱ δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν πίτνων,  
ὦ μήτερ, αὐδᾶ, ποῖ πατήρ ἄπεστι γῆς,  
τί δρᾶ, πόθ' ἤξει, τῷ νέῳ δ' ἐσφαλμένοι  
ζητοῦσι τὸν τεκόντ' ἐγὼ δὲ διαφέρω  
λόγοισι μυθεύουσα· θαυμάζω δ', ὅταν  
πύλαι ψοφῶσι, πᾶς τ' ἀνίστησιν πόδα,  
ὥς πρὸς πατρῶον προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ
- 80 νῦν οὖν τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἢ πόρον σωτηρίας  
ἔξευμαρίζει, πρέσβυ, πρὸς σέ γάρ βλέπω.  
ὥς οὔτε γαίης ὀρί' ἂν ἐκβαῖμεν λάθρα·  
φυλακαὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν κρείσσονες κατ' ἐξόδους·  
οὐτ' ἐν φίλοισιν ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας  
ἔτ' εἰσὶν ἡμῖν ἥντιν' οὖν γνώμην ἔχεις

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And of friends some, I note, are insincere,  
Some, friends in truth, are helpless for our aid  
Such evil is misfortune unto men,  
'Tis friendship's steinest test may it never come  
To friend of mine, how faint soe'er his love !

### MEGARA

Ancient, who once didst smite the 'Taphians' burg,  
Captaining gloriously the Theban spears,  
How are God's ways with men past finding out !  
Not Fortune's outcast was I through my sire  
So prospered he, all men acclaimed him great  
Kingship he had—that thing for lust whereof  
Long lances leap against men fortune-throned  
Children had he, me to thy son he gave,  
In glorious spousal joined with Hercules  
Now is all dead—on vanished pinions flown !  
Now, ancient, thou and I are marked for death,  
With Hercules' children, whom, as 'neath her  
wings

A bird her fledglings gathereth, so I keep  
And this one, that one falls to questioning still—  
“Mother, in what land stays our father?—tell  
What doth he? When comes?” In child-ignorance  
They seek then sue and still I put them by  
With fables feigned, yet wondering start, when'er  
A door sounds, and all leap unto their feet,  
Looking to cling about their father's knees

What hope or path of safety, ancient, now  
Canst thou devise?—for unto thee I look  
We cannot quit the land's bounds unperceived,  
For at all outlets guards too strong are set  
Nor linger hopes of safety any more  
In friends What counsel then thou hast soe'er,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

λέγ' εἰς τὸ κοινόν, μὴ θανεῖν ἔτοιμον ἦ,  
χρόνον δὲ μηκύνωμεν ὄντες ἀσθενεῖς

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ θύγατερ, οὔτοι ῥάδιον τὰ τοιάδε  
φαύλως περαίνειν σπουδάσαντ' ἄνευ πόνου

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

90 λύπης τι προσδεῖς ἢ φιλεῖς οὔτω φάος ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ τῷδε χαίρω καὶ φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κἀγὼ δοκεῖν δὲ τὰδόκητ' οὐ χρή, γέρον

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐν ταῖς ἀναβολαῖς τῶν κακῶν ἔνεστ' ἄκη.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ με λυπρὸς ὢν δάκνει χρόνος

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἔτ' ἂν γένοιτ', ὦ θύγατερ, οὔριος δρόμος  
ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ κακῶν,  
ἔλθοι τ' ἔτ' ἂν παῖς οὐμός, εὐνήτωρ δὲ σός  
ἀλλ' ἡσύχαζε καὶ δακρυρρόους τέκνων  
πηγὰς ἀφαίρει καὶ παρευκλήλει λόγοις,  
100 κλέπτουσα μύθοις ἀθλίους κλοπὰς ὁμως.  
κάμνουσι γάρ τοι καὶ βροτῶν αἱ συμφοραί,  
καὶ πνεύματ' ἀνέμων οὐκ αἰεὶ ῥώμην ἔχει,  
οἳ τ' εὐτυχοῦντες διὰ τέλους οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς  
ἐξίσταται γὰρ πάντ' ἀπ' ἀλλήλων δίχα  
οὗτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσι  
πέποιθεν αἰεὶ τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν ἀνδρὸς κακοῦ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑψόροφα μέλαθρα  
καὶ γεραῖα δέμνι', ἀμφὶ βάκτροις

στρ.



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now speak it out, lest death be at the doo,  
And we, who are helpless, do but peize the time

AMPHITRYON

Daughter, not easily, without deep thought,  
May one, though ne'er so earnest, counsel here

MEGARA

Dost seek more grief? Art so in love with life?

AMPHITRYON

In this life I rejoice I love its hopes

MEGARA

And I yet for things hopeless none may look

AMPHITRYON

Even in delay is salve for evils found

MEGARA

But ah the gnawing anguish of suspense!

AMPHITRYON

Daughter, a fan-wind course may yet befall  
From storms of present ills for thee and me  
Yet may he come—my son, thy lord, may come  
Nay, calm thee stop the fountains welling tears  
Of these thy sons, and soothe them with thy words,  
Cheating them with a fable—piteous cheat!  
Sooth, men's afflictions weary of their work,  
And tempest-blasts not alway keep then force,  
Nor prosperous to the end the prosperous are;  
For all things fleet and yield each other place  
He is the hero, who in steadfast hope  
Trusts on—despair is but the coward's part  
*Enter CHORUS, leaning on their staves, and climbing the  
ascent to the altar*

CHORUS

Unto the stately palace-roofs, whereby (St.)  
The ancient coucheth on the ground,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- 110 ἔρεισμα θέμενος, ἐστάλην ἱαλέμων  
γόνων ἀοιδὸς ὥστε πολὺς ὄρνις,  
ἔπεα μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωπὸν  
ἐννύχων ὀνείρων,  
τρομερὰ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πρόθυμα  
ὦ τέκεα πατρὸς ἀπάτορ', ὦ  
γεραιὲ σύ τε τάλαινα μᾶ-  
τερ, ἃ τὸν Ἀίδα δόμοις  
πόσιν ἀναστενάζεις
- 120 μὴ πόδα προκάμῃτε ἀντ.  
βαρὺ τε κῶλον, ὥστε πρὸς πετραῖον  
†λέπας ζυγοφόρος ἄρματος βάρος φέρων  
τροχηλάτοιο πῶλος<sup>1</sup>  
λαβοῦ χερῶν καὶ πέπλων, ὅτου λέλοιπε  
ποδὸς ἀμαυρὸν ἵχνος·  
γέρων γέροντα παρακόμιζε,  
ὦ ξύνοπλα δόρατα νέα νέω  
τὸ πάρος ἐν ἡλίκων πόνοις  
ξυνῆν ποτ', εὐκλεεστάτας  
πατρίδος οὐκ ὀνείδη
- 130 ἴδετε, πατρὸς ὥς ἐπῳδ  
γοργῶπες αἶδε προσφερεῖς  
ὀμμάτων ἀνγαί,  
τὸ δὲ δὴ κακοτυχὲς οὐ λέλοιπεν ἐκ τέκνων,  
οὐδ' ἀποίχεται χάρις

<sup>1</sup> A very corrupt passage Nauck's reading adopted

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Bowed o'er my propping staff—a chanter I  
Whose song rings sorrow round— 110

Like some hoar swan I come—a voice, no more,  
Like to a night-dream's phantom-show,  
Palsied with eld, yet loyal as of yore  
To friends of long ago

Hail, children fatherless ! Hail, ancient, thou !  
Hail, mother bowed 'neath sorrow's load,  
Who mournest for thy lord long absent now  
In the Unseen King's abode !

Let feet not faint, nor let the tired limbs trail (*Ant*)  
Heavy, as when uphillward stem, 120  
Trampling the stones, a young steed's feet that hale  
The massy four-wheel wain

Lay hold on helping hand, on vesture's fold,  
Whoso hath failing feet that grope  
Blindly thy brother, ancient, thou uphold  
Up this steep temple-slope,

Thy friend, who once mid toils of battle-peers  
Shoulder to shoulder, did not shame—  
When thou and he were young, when clashed the  
spears,—

His country's glorious name

Mark ye how dragon-like glazing (*Epode*) 130  
As the eyes of the sire whom we knew  
Are the eyes of the sons !—and unsparing  
His hard lot followeth too  
His sons ! and the kingly men  
Of the sire in the children is seen

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Ἑλλὰς ὦ ξυμμάχους  
οἷους οἷους ὀλέσασα  
τούσδ' ἀποστερήσει

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τῆσδε κοίρανον χθονὸς  
Λύκον περῶντα τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος

### ΛΥΚΟΣ

τὸν Ἡράκλειον πατέρα καὶ ξυνάορον,  
εἰ χρή μ', ἐρωτῶ χρή δ', ἐπεὶ γε δεσπότης  
ὑμῶν καθέστηχ', ἱστορεῖν ἂ βούλομαι  
τίν' εἰς χρόνον ζητεῖτε μηκύναι βίον,  
τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἄλκῃν τ' εἰσορᾶτε μὴ θανεῖν,  
ἢ τὸν παρ' Ἀϊδη πατέρα τῶνδε κείμενον  
πιστεύεθ' ἤξειν, ὥς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν  
τὸ πένθος αἴρεσθ', εἰ θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρεῶν,  
σὺ μὲν καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἐκβαλὼν κόμπους κενοὺς  
ὥς σύγγαμός σοι Ζεὺς τέκνου τε κοινέων,<sup>2</sup>  
σὺ δ' ὥς ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ  
τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῶ κατείργασται πόσει,  
ὔδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανὼν  
ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρ', ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἐλὼν  
βραχίονός φησ' ἀγχόναισιν ἐξελεῖν  
τοῖσδ' ἐξαγωνίζεσθε, τῶνδ' ἄρ' εἵνεκεν  
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θνήσκειν χρεῶν,  
ὃς ἔσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὦν εὐψυχίας  
θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τᾶλλα δ' οὐδὲν ἄλκιμος,  
ὃς οὐποτ' ἀσπὶδ' ἔσχε πρὸς λαιᾷ χειρὶ  
οὐδ' ἦλθε λόγχης ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ τόξ' ἔχων,  
κάκιστον ὄπλον, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν.  
ἄνδρὸς δ' ἑλεγχος οὐχὶ τόξ' εὐψυχίας,

<sup>2</sup> Heath, for MSS τεκοι νέον,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O Hellas, if thou uncaring  
Beholdest them slain, what a band  
Of champions is lost to our land !

But lo, the ruler of this realm I see,  
Lycus, unto these mansions drawing nigh

*Enter* LYCUS

LYCUS

Thee, sire of Hercules, and thee, his wife,  
I ask—if ask I may—I may, I trow,  
Who am your lord, make question as I will—  
How long seek ye to lengthen out your lives ?  
What hope expect ye or help from imminent  
death ?

Trust ye that he, the sire of these, who lies  
In Hades, yet shall come ? How basely ye  
Upraise a mourning that ye needs must die !—  
Thou, who through Hellas scatteredst empty vaunts  
That Zeus was co-begetter of sons with thee,  
And thou, that thou wast named a hero's wife !  
What mighty exploit by thy lord was wrought  
In that he killed a hydra of the fen,  
Or that Nemean lion ?—which he snared,  
Yet saith he slew with grip of strangling arms !  
By *these* deeds would ye triumph ?—for their sake  
Must they die not, these sons of Hercules ?  
That thing of naught, who won him valour's name  
Batting with beasts, a craven in all else,  
Who never to his left arm clasped the shield,  
Nor within spear-thrust came, but with his bow,  
The dastard's tool, was ever at point to flee !  
Bows be no test of manhood's valiancy :

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἄλλ' ὃς μένων βλέπει τε κῆντιδέρκεται  
 δορὸς ταχεῖαν ἄλοκα τάξιν ἐμβεβώς  
 ἔχει δὲ τοῦμόν οὐκ ἀναΐδειαν, γέρον,  
 ἄλλ' εὐλάβειαν· οἶδα γὰρ κατακτανὼν  
 Κρέοντα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ θρόνους ἔχων  
 οὐκ οὖν τραφέντων τῶνδε τιμωροὺς ἐμοὶ  
 χρήζω λιπέσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

- 170 τὸ τοῦ Διὸς μὲν Ζεὺς ἀμυνέτω μέρει  
 παιδός· τὸ δ' εἰς ἐμ', Ἡράκλεις, ἐμοὶ μέλει  
 λόγιοισι τὴν τοῦδ' ἀμαθίαν ὑπὲρ σέθεν  
 δεῖξαι· κακῶς γάρ σ' οὐκ ἐάτεον κλύειν  
 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τάρρητ', ἐν ἀρρήτοισι γὰρ  
 τὴν σὴν νομίζω δειλίαν, Ἡράκλεες,  
 σὺν μάρτυσιν θεοῖς δεῖ μ' ἀπαλλάξαι σέθεν  
 Διὸς κεραυνὸν δ' ἠρόμην τέθριππά τε,  
 ἐν οἷς βεβηκὼς τοῖσι γῆς βλαστήμασι  
 Γίγασιν, πλευροῖς πτήν' ἐναρμόσας βέλη,  
 180 τὸν καλλίνικον μετὰ θεῶν ἐκώμασε  
 τετρασκελές θ' ὕβρισμα Κενταύρων γένος,  
 Φολόην ἐπελθών, ὦ κάκιστε βασιλέων,  
 ἐροῦ τί ν' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον ἐγκρίνειαν ἄν,  
 ἢ οὐ παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν, ὃν σὺ φῆς εἶναι δοκεῖν.  
 Δίρφυν δ' ἐρωτῶν ἢ σ' ἔθρεψ' Ἀβαντίδα,  
 οὐκ ἂν σ' ἐπαινέσειεν οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου  
 ἐσθλόν τι δράσας μάρτυρ' ἂν λάβοις πάτραι  
 τὸ πάνσοφον δ' εὖρημα, τοξήρη σάγγην,  
 μέμφει κλύων νῦν τὰ π' ἐμοῦ σοφὸς γενοῦ  
 190 ἀνὴρ ὀπλίτης δοῦλός ἐστι τῶν ὀπλων,  
 κὰν τοῖσι συνταχθεῖσιν οὔσι μὴ ἀγαθοῖς  
 αὐτὸς τέθνηκε δειλίᾳ τῇ τῶν πέλας,  
 θραύσας τε λόγχην οὐκ ἔχει τῷ σώματι



# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

θάνατον ἀμύναι, μίαν ἔχων ἀλκὴν μόνον·  
 ὅσοι δὲ τόξοις χεῖρ' ἔχουσιν εὖστοχον,  
 ἐν μὲν τὸ λῶστον, μυρίους οἰστοὺς ἀφείς  
 ἄλλοις τὸ σῶμα ῥύεται μὴ κατθανεῖν,  
 200 ἐκάς δ' ἀφεστῶς πολεμίους ἀμύνεται  
 τυφλοῖς ὀρώντας οὐτάσας τοξεύμασι,  
 τὸ σῶμά τ' οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς ἐναντίοις,  
 ἐν εὐφυλάκτῳ δ' ἐστί τοῦτο δ' ἐν μάχῃ  
 σοφὸν μάλιστα, δρῶντα πολεμίους κακῶς  
 σῶζειν τὸ σῶμα, μὴ ἐκ τύχης ὠρμισμένους  
 λόγοι μὲν οἶδε τοῖσι σοῖς ἐναντίαν  
 γνώμην ἔχουσι τῶν καθεστώτων πέρι  
 παῖδας δὲ δὴ τί τούσδ' ἀποκτείνει θέλεις,  
 τί σ' οἶδ' ἔδρασαν, ἐν τί σ' ἡγοῦμαι σοφόν,  
 εἰ τῶν ἀρίστων τᾶκγον' αὐτὸς ὢν κακὸς  
 210 δέδοικας ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὅμως ἡμῖν βαρύν,  
 εἰ δειλίας σῆς κατθανούμεθ' εἵνεκα,  
 ὃ χρεὴν σ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἀμεινόνων παθεῖν,  
 εἰ Ζεὺς δικαίως εἶχεν εἰς ἡμᾶς φρένας.  
 εἰ δ' οὖν ἔχειν γῆς σκῆπτρα τῆσδ' αὐτὸς θέλεις,  
 ἔασον ἡμᾶς φυγάδας ἐξελθεῖν χθονός·  
 βία δὲ δράσης μηδέν, ἥ πείσει βίαν,  
 ὅταν θεὸς σοι πνεῦμα μεταβαλὼν τύχῃ  
 φεύ  
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου, καὶ γὰρ εἰς σ' ἀφίξομαι  
 λόγους ὄνειδιστῆρας ἐνδαπούμενος,  
 τοιαύτ' ἀμύνεθ' Ἡρακλεῖ τέκνοισί τε,  
 220 ὃς εἰς Μινύαισι πᾶσι διὰ μάχης μολῶν  
 Θήβαις ἔθηκεν ὅμμ' ἐλεύθερον βλέπειν.  
 οὐδ' Ἑλλάδ' ἦνεσ', οὐδ' ἀνέξομαί ποτε  
 συγῶν, κακίστην λαμβάνων εἰς παῖδ' ἐμόν,  
 ἦν χρεὴν νεοσσοῖς τοῖσδε πῦρ λόγχας ὅπλα



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Death from himself, who hath but one defence  
 But he whose hand is cunning with the bow,—  
 This first, and best,—lets fly unnumbered shafts,  
 Yet still hath store wherewith to avert the death  
 Afar he stands, yet beats the foeman back,  
 And wounds with shafts unseen, watch as they will,  
 Yet never bares his body to the foe, 200  
 But is safe-warded, and in battle this  
 Is wisest policy, still to harm all foes  
 'That beyond range shrink not, oneself unhurt  
 These words have sense opposed full-face to thine  
 Touching the matter set at issue here

But wherefore art thou fain to slay these boys ?  
 What have they done ? Herein I count thee wise,  
 That thou, thyself a dastard, fear'st the seed  
 Of heroes . yet hard fate is this for us,  
 If we shall for thy cowardice' sake be slain, 210  
 As thou by us thy betters shouldst have been,  
 If Zeus to us were righteously inclined  
 Yet, if thy will be still to keep Thebes' crown,  
 Suffer us exiled to go forth the land,  
 But do no violence, lest thou suffer it,  
 When God shall haply cause the wind to change

Out on it !  
 O land of Cadmus,—for to thee I turn,  
 Over thee hurling mine upbraiding words,—  
 Hercules and his sons *thus* succourest thou,  
 Him who alone faced all the Minyan host, 220  
 And made the eyes of Thebes see freedom's dawn ?  
 Oh, shame on Hellas !—I will hold my peace  
 Never, who prove her ingrate to my son,—  
 Her, whom behoved with fire, with spear, with shield

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φέρουσαν ἐλθεῖν, ποντίων καθαρμάτων  
 χέρσου τ' ἀμοιβάς, ὧν ἐμόχθησεν χάριν  
 τὰ δ', ὦ τέκν', ὑμῖν οὔτε Θηβαίων πόλις  
 οὔθ' Ἑλλάς ἀρκεῖ πρὸς δ' ἔμ' ἀσθενὴ φίλον  
 230 δεδόρκατ', οὐδὲν ὄντα πλὴν γλώσσης ψόφον  
 ῥώμη γὰρ ἐκλέλοιπεν ἦν πρὶν εἶχομεν·  
 γῆρα δὲ τρομερὰ γυῖα κάμαυρον σθένος  
 εἰ δ' ἦ νέος τε καὶ σώματος κρατῶν,  
 λαβὼν ἂν ἔγχος τοῦδε τοὺς ξανθοὺς πλόκους  
 καθημάτων' ἄν, ὥστ' Ἀτλαντικῶν πέραν  
 φεύγειν ὄρων ἂν δειλία τοῦμόν δόρυ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἂρ' οὐκ ἀφορμὰς τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀγαθοὶ  
 θνητῶν ἔχουσι, καὶ βραδύς τις ἢ λέγειν ,

### ΛΤΚΟΣ

σὺ μὲν λέγ' ἡμᾶς οἷς πεπύργωσαι λόγοις,  
 ἐγὼ δὲ δράσω σ' ἀντὶ τῶν λόγων κακῶς.  
 240 ἄγ', οἱ μὲν Ἑλικῶν', οἱ δὲ Παρνασοῦ πτυχαῖς  
 τέμνειν ἀνωχθ' ἐλθόντες ὑλουργοὺς δρυὸς  
 κορμούς· ἐπειδὰν δ' εἰσκομισθῶσιν πόλει,  
 βωμόν πέριξ νήσαντες ἀμφήρη ξύλα  
 ἐμπίπρατ' αὐτῶν καὶ πυροῦτε σώματα  
 πάντων, ἵν' εἰδῶσ' οὔνεκ' οὐχ ὁ κατθανὼν  
 κρατεῖ χθονὸς τῆσδ', ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὰ νῦν τάδε  
 ὑμεῖς δὲ πρέσβεις ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐναντίοι  
 γινώμαισιν ὄντες, οὐ μόνον στενάξετε  
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἀλλὰ καὶ δῶμον  
 250 τύχας, ὅταν πάσχη τι, μεμνήσεσθε δὲ  
 δοῦλοι γεγῶτες τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ γῆς λοχεύμαθ', οὗς Ἀρης σπείρει ποτὲ  
 λάβρον δράκοντος ἐξερημώσας γένυν,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To have helped these babes, thank-offering for his  
toils,  
Repayment for his purging seas and lands  
Ah boys, such aid to you the Thebans' town  
Nor Hellas brings ! To me, a strengthless friend,  
Ye look, who am nothing but a voice's sound  
For vanished is the might I had of old, 230  
Palsied with eld my limbs are, gone my strength  
Were I but young yet, master of my thews,  
I had grasped a lance, this fellow's yellow hair  
I had dashed with blood, and so before my spear  
Far beyond Atlas' bounds the craven had fled !

### CHORUS

Lo, cannot brave men find occasion still  
For speech, how slow so'er one be of tongue ?

### LYCUS

Rail on at me with words up-piled as towers  
I will for words requite on thee ill deeds  
(*To attendant*) Ho ! bid my woodmen go—to Helicon  
these, 240  
Those to Parnassus' folds, and hew them logs  
Of oak ; and, when these into Thebes are brought,  
On either side the altar billets pile,  
And kindle , so the bodies of all these  
Roast ye, that they may know that not the dead  
Ruleth the land, but now am I king here  
And ye old men which set yourselves against  
My purpose, not for Hercules' sons alone  
Shall ye make moan, but for your homes' affliction,  
Fast as blows fall, and so shall not forget 250  
That ye are bondslaves of my princely power

### CHORUS

O brood of Earth, whom Ares sowed of yore,  
What time he stipped the dragon's ravening jaws,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ σκῆπτρα, χειρὸς δεξιᾶς ἐρείσματα,  
 ἄρειτε καὶ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀνόσιον κᾶρα  
 καθαιματώσεθ', ὅστις οὐ Καδμείος ὦν  
 ἄρχει κάκιστος τῶν νέων ἔπηλυς ὦν ,  
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε δεσπόμεναι χαίρων ποτε,  
 οὐδ' ἀπόνησα πόλλ' ἐγὼ καμῶν χειρὶ  
 260 ἔξεις· ἀπέρρων δ' ἔνθεν ἦλθες ἐνθάδε,  
 ὕβριζ'. ἐμοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐ κτενεῖς ποτε  
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας· οὐ τοσόνδε γῆς  
 ἔνερθ' ἐκείνος κρύπτεται λιπὼν τέκνα.  
 ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν γῆν τήνδε διολέσας ἔχεις,  
 ὁ δ' ὠφελήσας ἀξίων οὐ τυγχάνει·  
 κᾶππειτα πράσσω πόλλ' ἐγὼ, φίλους ἐμοὺς  
 θανόντας εὖ δρῶν οὐ φίλων μάλιστα δεῖ ,  
 ὦ δεξιὰ χεῖρ, ὡς ποθεῖς λαβεῖν δόρυ,  
 ἐν δ' ἀσθενείᾳ τὸν πόθον διώλεσας.  
 270 ἐπεὶ σ' ἔπαυσ' ἂν δοῦλον ἐννέποντά με  
 καὶ τάσδε Θήβας εὐκλεῶς ᾠκήσαμεν,  
 ἐν αἷς σὺ χαίρεις οὐ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖ πόλις  
 στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλευμασιν  
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἂν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτήσατο

## ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

γέροντες, αἰνῶ· τῶν φίλων γὰρ εἵνεκα  
 ὀργὰς δικαίας τοὺς φίλους ἔχειν χρεῶν  
 ἡμῶν δ' ἕκατι δεσπότην θυμούμενοι  
 πάθητε μηδέν. τῆς δ' ἐμῆς, Ἀμφιτρύων,  
 γνώμης ἄκουσον, ἣν τί σοι δοκῶ λέγειν  
 280 ἐγὼ φιλῶ μὲν τέκνα πῶς γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ  
 ἄτικτον, ἀμόχθησα ; καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν  
 δεινὸν νομίζω τῷ δ' ἀναγκαίῳ τρόπῳ .

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Will ye not lift the props of your right hands,  
Your staves, and dash with blood the impious head  
Of yon man, who, though no Cadmeian he,  
Base outland upstart, captains the Young Men<sup>1</sup>  
Thou shalt not scatheless lord it over me!  
Not that which I have gotten by toil of hand  
Shalt thou have! Hence with curses whence thou  
can'st!

260

There outrage! Whilst I live thou ne'er shalt slay  
Hercules' sons! Not hidden in earth too deep  
For help is he, though he hath left his babes.  
Thou, ruin of this land, possessest her,  
And he, her saviour, faileth of his due!  
Am I a busy meddler then, who aid  
Dead friends in plight where friends are needed  
most?

Ah right hand, how thou yearn'st to grip the spear,  
But in thy weakness know'st thy yearning vain!  
Else had I smitten thy taunt of *bondsman* dumb,  
And we had ruled with honour this our Thebes  
Wherein thou joyest! A city plagued with strife  
And evil counsels thinketh not aright,  
Else never had she gotten thee for lord

270

### MEGARA

Fathers, I thank you Needs must friends be filled  
With righteous indignation for friends' wrongs  
Yet for our sake through wrath against your lords  
Suffer not scathe Amphitryon, hearken thou  
My counsel, if my words seem good to thee  
I love my sons,—how should I not love whom  
I bare and toiled for?—and to die I count  
Fearful yet—yet—against the inevitable

280

<sup>1</sup> The revolutionary party, who styled themselves "Young Thebes"

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

290 ὃς ἀντιτείνει, σκαιὸν ἡγοῦμαι βροτόν.  
 ἡμᾶς δ' ἐπειδὴ δεῖ θανεῖν, θνήσκειν χρεὼν  
 μὴ πυρὶ καταξανθέντας, ἐχθροῖσιν γέλων  
 διδόντας, οὐμοὶ τοῦ θανεῖν μείζον κακόν  
 ὀφείλομεν γὰρ πολλὰ δώμασιν καλὰ.  
 σέ μὲν δόκησις ἔλαβεν εὐκλεῆς δορός,  
 ὥστ' οὐκ ἀνεκτὸν δειλίας θανεῖν σ' ὕπο  
 οὐμός δ' ἀμαρτύρητος εὐκλεῆς πόσις,  
 ὡς τούσδε παῖδας οὐκ ἂν ἐκσῶσαι θέλοι  
 δόξαν κακὴν λαβόντας· οἱ γὰρ εὐγενεῖς  
 κάμνουσι τοῖς αἰσχροῖσι τῶν τέκνων ὕπερ,  
 ἐμοὶ τε μίμημ' ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἀπωστέον  
 σκέψαι δὲ τὴν σὴν ἐλπίδ', ἣ λογίζομαι  
 ἥξειν νομίζεις παῖδα σὸν γαίας ὕπο·  
 καὶ τίς θανόντων ἦλθεν ἐξ ἹΑιδου πάλιν,  
 ἀλλ' ὡς λόγοισι τόνδε μαλθάξαιμεν ἄν;  
 300 ἥκιστα· φεύγειν σκαιὸν ἄνδρ' ἐχθρὸν χρεὼν,  
 σοφοῖσι δ' εἴκειν καὶ τεθραμμένοις καλῶς  
 ῥᾶον γὰρ αἰδοῦς ὑποβαλὼν φίλ' ἂν τύχοις  
 ἥδη δ' ἐσῆλθέ μ' εἰ παραιτησαίμεθα  
 φυγὰς τέκνων τῶνδ' ἀλλὰ καὶ τόδ' ἄθλιον,  
 πενία σὺν οἰκτρᾷ περιβαλεῖν σωτηρίαν·  
 ὡς τὰ ξένων πρόσωπα φεύγουσιν φίλοις  
 ἐν ἡμαρ ἡδὺ βλέμμ' ἔχειν φασὶν μόνον  
 τόλμα μεθ' ἡμῶν θάνατον, ὃς μένει σ' ὁμως.  
 προκαλούμεθ' εὐγένειαν, ὦ γέρον, σέθεν  
 310 τὰς τῶν θεῶν γὰρ ὅστις ἐκμοχθεῖ τύχας,  
 πρόθυμός ἐστιν, ἢ προθυμία δ' ἄφρων  
 ὃ χρὴ γὰρ οὐδεὶς μὴ χρεὼν θήσει ποτέ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ μὲν σθενόντων τῶν ἐμῶν βραχιόνων  
 ἦν τίς σ' ὑβρίζων, ῥαδίως ἐπαύσατ' ἄν·

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who strives, I hold him but a foolish man  
Since we must needs die, better 'tis to die  
Not with fire roasted, yielding laughter-scoff  
To foes, an evil worse than death to me  
Great is our debt of honour to our house —  
Thou hast been crowned with glorious battle-fame,  
Thou canst not, must not, die a coward's death  
Nor any witness needs my glorious spouse 290  
That he would not consent to save these sons  
Stained with ill-fame for fathers gently born  
Are crushed beneath the load of children's shame  
My lord's example I cannot thrust from me  
Thine own hope—mark how lightly I esteem it  
Dost think, from the underworld thy son shall  
come?

Ah, of the dead, who hath returned from Hades?  
Dost dream we might with words appease this  
wretch?

Never!—of all foes, still beware the churl!  
Yield, if thou must, to wise and high-bred foes, 300  
So thy submission may find chivalrous grace  
Even now methought, "What if we asked for these  
The boon of exile?"—nay, 'twere misery  
To give them life with wretched penury linked  
For upon exile-friends the eyes of hosts  
Look kindly, say they, one day and no more  
Face death with us it waits thee in any wise  
Thy noble blood I challenge, ancient friend  
Whoso with eager struggling would writhe out  
From fate's net, folly is his eagerness 310.  
For doom's decree shall no man disannul

### CHORUS

Had any outraged thee while yet mine arms  
Were strong, right quickly had he ceased therefrom,

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

νῦν δ' οὐδέν ἐσμεν σὸν δὲ τοῦντεῦθεν σκοπεῖν  
ὅπως διώσει τὰς τύχας, Ἀμφιτρύων

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὔτοι τὸ δειλὸν οὐδὲ τοῦ βίου πόθος  
θανεῖν ἐρύκει μ', ἀλλὰ παιδὶ βούλομαι  
σῶσαι τέκν' ἄλλως δ' ἀδυνάτων ἔοικ' ἐρᾶν  
320 ἰδοῦ πάρεστιν ἥδε φασγάνῳ δέρη  
κεντεῖν φονεύειν, ἰέναι πέτρας ἄπο  
μίαν δὲ νῦν δὸς χάριν, ἄναξ, ἱκνούμεθα  
κτεῖνόν με καὶ τήνδ' ἀθλίαν παίδων πάρος,  
ὥς μὴ τέκν' εἰσίδωμεν, ἀνόσιον θέαν,  
ψυχορραγοῦντα καὶ καλοῦντα μητέρα  
πατρός τε πατέρα τᾶλλα δ' ἣ πρόθυμος εἰ  
πρᾶσσ' οὐ γὰρ ἀλκὴν ἔχομεν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν

### ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κἀγὼ σ' ἱκνούμαι χάριτι προσθεῖναι χάριν,  
ἡμῖν ἔν' ἀμφοῖν εἰς ἱπουργήσης διπλᾶ  
330 κόσμον πάρες μοι παισὶ προσθεῖναι νεκρῶν,  
δόμους ἀνοίξας—νῦν γὰρ ἐκκεκλήμεθα—  
ὥς ἀλλὰ ταῦτά γ' ἀπολάβωσ' οἴκων πατρός.

### ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· οἴγειν κλῆθρα προσπόλοις λέγω  
κοσμεῖσθ' ἔσω μολόντες· οὐ φθονῶ πέπλων.  
ὅταν δὲ κόσμον περιβάλησθε σώμασιν,  
ἥξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς νερτέρᾳ δώσων χθονί.

### ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ τέκν', ὁμαρτεῖτ' ἀθλίῳ μητρὸς ποδὶ  
πατρῶν εἰς μέλαθρον, οὐ τῆς οὐσίας  
ἄλλοι κρατοῦσι, τὸ δ' ὄνομ' ἔσθ' ἡμῶν ἔτι



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

But now I am naught 'Tis thine, Amphitryon, now  
To search how thou shalt pierce misfortune's snares

### AMPHITRYON

Nor cowardice nor life-craving holds me back  
From death but for my son I fain would save  
His sons—I covet things past hope, meseems  
Lo, here my throat is ready for thy sword,  
For stabbing, murdering, hurling from the rock 320  
Yet grant us twain one grace, I pray thee, king  
Slay me and this poor mother ere the lads,  
That—sight unhallowed—we see not the boys  
Gaspng out life, and calling on their mother  
And grandsire . in all else thine eager will  
Work out ; for we have no defence from death

### MEGARA

And, I beseech, to this grace add a grace,  
To be twice benefactor to us twain —  
Open yon doors , let me array my sons  
In death's attire,—for now are we shut out,— 330  
Their one inheritance from their father's halls

### LYCUS

So be it I bid my men throw wide the doors.  
Pass in , adorn you I begrudge no robes  
But, when ye have cast the arraying round your  
limbs,  
I come, to give you to the nether world. [Exit

### MEGARA

Children, attend your hapless mother's steps  
To your sire's halls, where others' mastery holds  
His substance, but his name yet lingereth ours  
[Exit with children.

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

## ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

340 ὦ Ζεῦ, μάτην ἄρ' ὁμόγαμόν σ' ἐκτησάμην,  
 μάτην δὲ παιδὸς κοινεῶν<sup>1</sup> σ' ἐκλήζομεν  
 σὺ δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' ἦσσον ἢ ὀδοὶς εἶναι φίλος.  
 ἀρετῇ σε νικῶ θνητὸς ὦν θεὸν μέγαν·  
 παῖδας γὰρ οὐ προὔδωκα τοὺς Ἡρακλέους.  
 σὺ δ' εἰς μὲν εὐνὰς κρύφιος ἠπίστω μολεῖν,  
 τὰλλότρια λέκτρα δόντος οὐδενὸς λαβών,  
 σφάζειν δὲ τοὺς σοὺς οὐκ ἐπίστασαι φίλους.  
 ἀμαθὴς τις εἰ θεός, ἢ δίκαιος οὐκ ἔφυς.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

350 αἴλιον μὲν ἐπ' εὐτυχεῖ στρ α'  
 μολπᾷ Φοῖβος ἰαχεῖ,  
 τὰν καλλίφθογγον κιθάραν  
 ἐλαύνων πλήκτρῳ χρυσέῳ·  
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν γᾶς ἐνέρων τ' ἐς ὄρφναν  
 μολόντα, παῖδ' εἴτε Διὸς νιν εἶπω  
 εἴτ' Ἀμφιτρώωνος ἱνιν,  
 ὑμνῆσαι στεφάνωμα μό-  
 χθων δι' εὐλογίας θέλω  
 γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων  
 τοῖς θανούσιν ἄγαλμα  
 360 πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς ἄλσος  
 ἠρήμωσε λέοντος,  
 πυρσῷ δ' ἀμφεκαλύφθη  
 ξανθὸν κρᾶτ' ἐπινωτίσας  
 δεινῷ χάσματι θηρός·

<sup>1</sup> Scaliger for MSS τοὶ νεῶν and τὸν νεῶν

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### AMPHITRYON

Zeus, for my couch-mate gained I thee in vain,  
Named thee in vain co-father of my son 340  
Less than thou seemedst art thou friend to us !  
Mortal, in worth thy godhead I outdo  
Hercules' sons have I abandoned not  
Cunning wast thou to steal unto my couch,—  
To filch another's right none tendered thee,—  
Yet know'st not how to save thy dear ones now !  
Thine is unwisdom, or injustice thine [Exit

### CHORUS

*The Lay of the Labours of Hercules* <sup>1</sup>  
Hard on the pæan triumphant-ringing (*Str* 1)  
Oft Phoebus outpealeth a mourning-song,  
O'er the strings of his harp of the voice  
sweet-singing 350  
Sweeping the plectrum of gold along  
I also of him who hath passed to the places  
Of underworld gloom—whether Zeus' Son's  
story, [praises—  
Or Amphitryon's scion be theme of my  
Sing I am fain to uplift him before ye  
Wreathed with the Twelve Toils' garland of  
glory  
For the dead have a heritage, yea, have a crown,  
Even deathless memorial of deeds of renown

### I *The Nemean Lion*

In Zeus' glen first, in the Lion's lair,  
He fought, and the terror was no more there, 360  
But the tawny beast's grim jaws were veiling  
His golden head, and behind swept, trailing  
Over his shoulders, its fell of hair

<sup>1</sup> For II, V, VII, VIII, later writers substitute the Erymanthian Boar, the Augean Stables, the Stymphalian Birds, and the Cretan Bull

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάν τ' ὀρεινόμον ἀγρίων ἀντ α'  
 Κενταύρων ποτὲ γένναν  
 ἔστρωσεν τόξοις φονίοις,  
 ἐναίρων πτανοῖς βέλεσιν  
 ξύνοιδε Πηνειὸς ὁ καλλιδίνης  
 μακραί τ' ἄρουραι πεδίῳ ἄκαρποι  
 καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπναι  
 σύγχορτοί θ' Ὀμόλας ἔναυ-  
 λοι, πεύκαισιν ὄθεν χέρας  
 πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσαλῶν  
 ἱππείαις ἐδάμαζον

τάν τε χρυσοκάρανον  
 δόρκαν ποικιλόνωτον  
 συλήτειραν ἀγρωστᾶν  
 κτείνας, θηροφόνον θεᾶν  
 Οἰνωᾶτιν ἀγάλλει

370 στρ β  
 τεθριππων τ' ἐπέβα  
 καὶ ψαλλίους ἐδάμασσε πώλους  
 Διομήδεος, αἱ φονίαισι φάτναις  
 ἀχάλιν' ἐθόαζον  
 κάθαιμα σῖτα γένυσι, χαρμοναῖσιν  
 ἀνδροβρῶσι δυστράπεζοι περῶν δ'

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### II *The Centaurs*

Then on the mountain-haunters raming (*Ant* 1)  
Far-flying arrows, his hand laid low  
The tameless tribes of the Centaurs, straining  
Against them of old that deadly bow  
Peneius is witness, the lovely-gliding,  
And the fields unsown o'er plains wide-  
spreading,  
And the hamlets in glens of Pelion hiding,  
And on Homole's borders many a steading,  
Whence poued they with ruining hoofs down-  
treading  
Thessaly's harvests, for battle-brands  
Tossing the mountain pines in their hands

### III *The Golden-horned Hind*

And the Hind of the golden-antlered head,  
And the dappled hide, which wont to spread  
O'er the lands of the husbandmen stark deso-  
lation,  
He slew it, and brought, for propitiation,  
Unto Oenoe's Goddess, the Huntress dread

### IV *The Horses of Diomedes*

And on Diomedes's chariot he rode, for he reined (*St* 2)  
them,  
By his bits overmastered, the stallions four  
That had ravined at mangers of murder, and  
stained them  
With revel of banquets of horror, when gore  
From men's limbs dripped that their fierce  
teeth tore

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀργυρορρύταν Ἐβρον  
 ἐξέπρασσε μόχθον,<sup>1</sup>  
 Μυκηναίῳ πονῶν τυράννῳ·

τάν τε Μηλιάδ' ἄκταν  
 Ἀναύρου παρὰ πηγάς  
 Κύκνον δὲ ξενοδαίκταν  
 τόξοις ὤλεσεν, Ἀμφαναί-  
 ας οἰκήτορ' ἄμικτον

ὑμνωδούς τε κόρας αὐτ β  
 ἤλυθεν, Ἑσπερίαν ἐς αὐλήν,  
 χρύσειον πετάλων ἀπὸ μηλοφόρων  
 χερὶ καρπὸν ἀμέρξων,  
 δράκοντα πυρσώνωντον, ὅς σφ' ἄπλατον  
 ἀμφελικτὸς ἔλικ' ἐφρούρει, κτανών

ποντίας θ' ἁλὸς μυχοῦς  
 εἰσέβαινε, θνατοῖς  
 γαλανείας τιθεὶς ἐρετμοῖς

οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπὸ μέσσαν  
 ἐλαύνει χέρας ἔδραν,  
 Ἄτλαντος δόμον ἐλθών·  
 ἀστρωπούς τε κατέσχευ οἴ-  
 κους εὐανορίᾳ θεῶν·

<sup>1</sup> Dindorf for MSS πέραν διεπέρασ' ὕχθον

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### V *Cycnus the Robber*

Over eddies of Hebrus silvery-coiling  
He passed to the great work yet to be done,  
In the tasks of the lord of Mycenae toiling ;  
By the surf mid the Maliac reefs ever boiling,  
And by founts of Anaurus, he journeyed on, 390  
Till the shaft from his string did the death-  
challenge sing  
Unto Cycnus the guest-slayer, Amphanae's king,  
Who gave welcome to none

### VI *The Golden Apples*

(Ant 2)

To the Song-maids he came, to the Garden  
enfolden  
In glory of sunset, to pluck, where they grew  
Mid the fruit-laden frondage the apples golden,  
And the flame-hued diagon, the waider that  
drew  
All round it his terrible spires, he slew

### VII *Extirpation of Pirates*

Through the rovers' gorges seaward-gazing 400  
He sought ; and thereafter in peace might roam  
All maimers plying the oars swift-racing

### VIII *The Pillars of Heaven*

To the mansion of Atlas he came, and placing  
His arms outstretched 'neath the sky's mid-dome,  
By his might he upbore the firmament's floor,  
And the palace with splendour of stars fletted o'er,  
The Immortals' home

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸν ἵππευτάν τ' Ἀμαζόνων στρατὸν στρ γ'  
 Μαιώτιν ἀμφὶ πολυπόταμον  
 410 ἔβα δι' Εὐξεινον οἶδμα λίμνας,  
 τίν' οὐκ ἀφ' Ἑλλανίας  
 ἄγορον ἀλίσας φίλων,  
 †κόρας Ἀρείας πλέων<sup>1</sup>  
 χρυσέου στόλον φάρους,†  
 ζωστήρος ὀλεθρίους ἄγρας ,  
 τὰ κλεινὰ δ' Ἑλλὰς ἔλαβε βαρβάρου κόρας  
 λάφυρα, καὶ σῶζεται Μυκῆναις

τάν τε μυριόκρανον  
 420 πολύφονον κύνα Λέρνας  
 ὕδραν ἐξεπύρωσεν,

βέλεσί τ' ἀμφέβαλ' ἰόν,<sup>2</sup>  
 τὸν τρισώματον οἷσιν ἔ-  
 κτα βοτῆρ' Ἑρυθείας.

δρόμων τ' ἄλλων ἀγάλματ' εὐτυχῇ ἀντ γ'  
 διήλθε τὸν τε πολυδάκρυον  
 ἔπλευσ' ἐς Ἀιδαν, πόνων τελευτάν,  
 ἵν' ἐκπεραίνει τάλας

<sup>1</sup> Murray's conjecture, for MSS πέπλων χρυσεόστολον  
 φάρος

<sup>2</sup> Wecklein for MSS ἀμφέβαλε τὸν.



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### IX *The Amazon's Girdle*

(*Str* 3)

On the Amazon hosts upon war-steeds riding  
By the shores of Maeotis, the river-meads  
green,  
He fell, for the surges of Euxine he cleft 410  
What brother in arms was in Hellas left,  
That came not to follow his banner's guiding,  
When to win the Belt of the Warrior Queen,  
The golden clasp of the mantle-vest,  
He sailed far forth on a death-fraught quest?  
And the wild maid's spoils for a glory abiding  
Greece won in Mycenae they yet shall be  
seen

### X *The Hydra*

And the myriad heads he seared  
Of the Hydra-fiend with flame, 420  
Of the murderous hound Lernaean

### XI *The Three-bodied Giant Geryon*

With its venom the arrows he smeared  
That stung through the triple frame  
Of the herdman-king Erythaeon

### XII. *Cerberus*

(*Ant* 3)

Many courses beside hath he run, ever earning  
Triumph, but now to the dolorous land,  
Unto Hades, hath sailed for his last toil-  
strife,  
And there hath he quenched his light of life

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

430 βίοτον οὐδ' ἔβα πάλιν  
 στέγαι δ' ἔρημοι φίλων,  
 τὰν δ' ἀνόστιμον τέκνων  
 Χάρωνος ἐπιμένει πλάτα  
 βίου κέλευθον ἄθεον ἄδικον· εἰς δὲ σὰς  
 χέρας βλέπει δώματ' οὐ παρόντος  
 εἰ δ' ἐγὼ σθένος ἦβων  
 δόρυ τ' ἔπαλλον ἐν αἰχμᾷ,  
 Καδμείων τε σύνηβοι,  
 440 τέκεσιν ἂν παρέσταν  
 ἀλκᾷ νῦν δ' ἀπολείπομαι  
 τᾶς εὐδαίμονος ἦβας.

ἀλλ' ἐσορῶ γὰρ τούσδε φθιμένων  
 ἔνδυντ' ἔχοντας, τοὺς τοῦ μεγάλου  
 δήποτε παῖδας τὸ πρὶν Ἡρακλέους,  
 ἄλοχον τε φίλην ὑποσειραίους  
 ποσὶν ἔλκουσαν τέκνα, καὶ γεραίον  
 πατέρ' Ἡρακλέους δύστηνος ἐγώ,  
 450 δακρύων ὥς οὐ δύναμαι κατέχειν  
 γραίας ὅσων ἔτι πηγᾶς

## ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

εἶεν τίς ἱερεὺς, τίς σφαγεὺς τῶν δυσπότημων  
 ἢ τῆς ταλαίνης τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς φονεὺς,  
 ἔτοιμ' ἄγειν τὰ θύματ' εἰς Ἄϊδου τάδε  
 ὦ τέκν', ἀγόμεθα ζεύγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν,  
 ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες  
 ὦ μοῖρα δυστάλαιν' ἐμή τε καὶ τέκνων  
 τῶνδ', οὓς πανύστατ' ὄμμασιν προσδέρκομαι  
 ἔτεκον μὲν ὑμᾶς, πολεμήοις δ' ἐθρεψάμην

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Utterly—woe for the unreturning !  
And of friends forlorn doth thy dwelling stand , 430  
And waits for thy children Charon's oar  
By the river that none may repass any more,  
Whither godless wrong would speed them and  
yearning  
We strain our eyes for a vanished hand  
But if mine were the youth and the might  
Of old—were mine old friends here,  
Might my spear but in battle be shaken,  
I had championed thy children in fight —  
But mid desolate days and drear 440  
I am left, of my youth forsaken !

Lo where they come !—the shrouds of burial  
cover  
Each one,—the children of that Hercules  
Named the most mighty in the days past over,  
She whom he loved, whose hands draw on-  
ward these  
Like to a chariot's trace-led steeds,—the father  
Stricken in years of Hercules !—woe's me !  
Fountains of tears within mine old eyes gather ,  
How should I stay them, such a sight who see ? 450

*Enter MEGARA, AMPHITRYON, and children.*

MEGARA

Who is the priest, the butcher, of the ill-starred ?  
O! who the murderer of my woeful life ?  
Ready the victims are to lead to death  
O sons, a shameful chariot-team death-driven  
Together, old men, mothers, babes, are we  
O hapless doom of me and these my sons  
Whom for the last time now mine eyes behold !  
I bare you, nursed you—all to be for foes

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ὑβρισμα κἀπίχαρμα καὶ διαφθοράν  
φεῦ

- 46() ἦ πολὺ με δόξης ἐξέπαισαν ἐλπίδες,  
ἦν πατρός ὑμῶν ἐκ λόγων ποτ' ἤλπισα  
σοὶ μὲν γὰρ Ἄργος ἔνεμ' ὁ κατθανὼν πατήρ,  
Εὐρυσθέως δ' ἔμελλες οἰκήσειν δόμους  
τῆς καλλικάρπου κράτος ἔχων Πελασγίας,  
στολήν τε θηρὸς ἀμφέβαλλε σῶ κἀρα  
λέοντος, ἦπερ αὐτὸς ἐξωπλίζετο·  
σὺ δ' ἦσθα Θηβῶν τῶν φιλαρμάτων ἀναξ,  
ἐγκληρα πεδία τὰμὰ γῆς κεκτημένος,  
ὥς ἐξέπειθες τὸν κατασπείραντά σε  
47() εἰς δεξιὰν δὲ σὴν ἀλεξητήριον  
ξύλον καθίει δαίδαλον, ψευδῇ δόσιν.  
σοὶ δ' ἦν ἔπερσε τοῖς ἐκηβόλοις ποτὲ  
τόξοισι δώσειν Οἰχαλίαν ὑπέσχετο.  
τρεῖς δ' ὄντας ὑμᾶς τριπτύχοις τυραννίσι  
πατήρ ἐπύργου, μέγα φρονῶν εὐανδρία  
ἐγὼ δὲ νύμφας ἠκροθινιαζόμεν,  
κῆδῃ συνάψουσ', ἐκ τ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς  
Σπάρτης τε Θηβῶν θ', ὡς ἀνημμένοι κάλῳ  
πρυμνησίοισι βίον ἔχουσ' εὐδαίμονα  
48() καὶ ταῦτα φροῦδα μεταβαλοῦσα δ' ἡ τύχη  
νύμφας μὲν ὑμῖν Κῆρας ἀντέδωκ' ἔχειν,  
ἐμοὶ δὲ δάκρυα λουτρά· δύστηνος φρενῶν  
πατήρ δὲ πατὴρ ἐστὶ γάμους ὄδε,  
"Αἰδην νομίζων πενθερόν, κῆδος πικρόν  
ᾧμοι, τίν' ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἢ τίν' ὕστατον  
πρὸς στέρνα θῶμαι, τῷ προσαρμόσω στόμα,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

A scoff, a glee, a thing to be destroyed  
Woe and alas !  
Ah for my shattered dreams, my broken hopes, 460  
Hopes that I once built on your father's words !

Argos to thee<sup>1</sup> thy dead sire would allot  
Thou in Eurystheus' palace wast to dwell  
In fair and rich Pelasgia's sceptred sway  
That beast's fell o'er thine head he wont to throw,  
The lion's skin wherein himself went clad  
Thou<sup>2</sup> shouldst be king of chaunt-loving Thebes,  
And hold the champaigns of mine heritage ,  
Thy prayer won this of him that gave thee life ,  
And to thy right hand would he yield the club, 470  
A feigned gift, his carven battle-stay  
To thee<sup>3</sup> the land, by his far-smiting bow  
Once wasted, promised he, Oechalia  
So with three princedoms would your sire exalt  
His three sons, in the pride of his great heart  
And I chose out the choice of Hellas' brides,  
Linking to ours by marriage Athens' land,  
And Thebes, and Sparta, that ye might, as ships  
Moored by sheet-anchors, ride the storms of life

All that is past the wind of fate hath veered, 480  
And given to you the Maids of Doom for brides,  
Tears for my bride-baths Woe for those my dreams !  
And now your grandsire makes the spousal-feast  
With Hades for brides' sire, grim marriage-kin  
Ah me ! whom first of you, or whom the last,  
To mine heart shall I press ?—whom to my lips ?

<sup>1</sup> The eldest son, Therimachus

<sup>2</sup> The second son, Creontidas

<sup>3</sup> The third son, Deicoon.

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

490 τίνος λάβωμαι, πῶς ἂν ὡς ξουθόπτερος  
 μέλισσα συνενέγκαιμ' ἂν ἐκ πάντων γόους,  
 εἰς ἓν δ' ἐνεγκοῦς' ἀθρόον ἀποδοίην δάκρυ  
 ὦ φίλτατ', εἴ τις φθόγγος εἰσακούεται  
 θνητῶν παρ' Ἀϊδη, σοὶ τάδ', Ἡράκλεις, λέγω  
 θνήσκει πατήρ σός καὶ τέκν', ὄλλυμαι δ' ἐγώ,  
 ἢ πρὶν μακαρία διὰ σ' ἐκληζόμεν βροτοῖς  
 ἄρηξον, ἐλθέ καὶ σκιά φάνηθί μοι·  
 ἄλλης γὰρ ἐλθὼν καὶ ὄναρ<sup>1</sup> γένοιο σύ  
 κακοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν οἳ τέκνα κτείνουσι σά

## ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

500 σὺ μὲν τὰ νέρθεν εὐτρεπῇ ποιοῦ, γύναι·  
 ἐγὼ δὲ σ', ὦ Ζεῦ, χεῖρ' ἐς οὐρανὸν δικῶν  
 αὐδῶ, τέκνοισιν εἴ τι τοισίδ' ὠφελεῖν  
 μέλλεις, ἀμύνειν, ὡς τάχ' οὐδὲν ἀρκέσεις  
 510 καίτοι κέκλησαι πολλάκις· μάτην πονῶ  
 θανεῖν γάρ, ὡς ἔοικ', ἀναγκαίως ἔχει  
 ἀλλ', ὦ γέροντες, μικρὰ μὲν τὰ τοῦ βίου  
 τοῦτον δ' ὅπως ἥδιστα διαπεράσετε,  
 ἐξ ἡμέρας εἰς νύκτα μὴ λυπούμενοι.  
 ὡς ἐλπίδας μὲν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἐπίσταται  
 σφάζειν, τὸ δ' αὐτοῦ σπουδάσας διέπτατο.  
 ὁρᾷτέ μ' ὅσπερ ἡ περίβλεπτος βροτοῖς  
 ὀνομαστὰ πράσσω, καί μ' ἀφείλεθ' ἡ τύχη  
 510 ὥσπερ πτερὸν πρὸς αἰθέρ' ἡμέρα μιᾷ  
 ὁ δ' ὄλβος ὁ μέγας ἢ τε δόξ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅτῳ  
 βέβαιός ἐστι χαίρετ'· ἄνδρα γὰρ φίλον  
 πανύστατον νῦν, ἥλικες, δεδόγκατε

## ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἔα

ὦ πρέσβυ, λεύσσω τὰμὰ φίλτατ', ἢ τί φῶ;

<sup>1</sup> Wilamowitz for MSS. ἱκανὸν ἂν

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Whom shall I clasp ? Oh but to gather store  
Of moan, like brown-winged bee, from grief's wide  
field,

And blend together in tribute of one tear !  
Dear love,—if any in Hades of the dead 490  
Can hear,—I say this to thee, Hercules  
Thy sire, thy sons, are dying, doomed am I,  
I, once through thee called blest in all men's eyes  
Help !—come !—though as a shadow, yet appear !  
Thy coming as a dream-shape should suffice  
To daunt the ciavens who would slay thy sons !

### AMPHITRYON

Lady, the death-rites duly order thou  
But I, O Zeus, with hand to heaven upcast,  
Cry—if for these babes thou hast any help,  
Save them, for soon thou nothing shalt avail 500  
Yet oft hast thou been played in vain I toil,  
For now, meseems, we cannot choose but die  
Ah friends, old friends, short is the span of life  
See ye pass through it blithely as ye may,  
Wasting no time in grief 'twixt morn and eve  
For nothing careth Time to spare our hopes  
Swiftly he works his work, and fleets away  
See me, the observed of all observers once,  
Doei of deeds of name—in one day all  
Fortune hath snatched, as a feather skyward blown 510  
None know I whose great wealth or high repute  
Is sure Farewell for him that was your friend  
Now for the last time, age-mates, have ye seen  
*HERCULES appears in the distance*

### MEGARA

Ha !  
Ancient, my dear lord—else what ?—do I see ?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα, θύγατερ ἄφασία δὲ καὶ ἔχει

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὃδ' ἐστὶν ὃν γῆς νέρθεν εἰσηκούομεν,  
εἰ μὴ γ' ὄνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσσομεν  
τί φημί, ποῖ' ὄνειρα κηραίνουσ' ὀρώ,  
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὃδ' ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ παιδός, γέρον  
520 δεῦρ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκκρήμνασθε πατρῶων πέπλων,  
ἵτ' ἐγκονεῖτε, μὴ μεθῇτ', ἐπεὶ Διὸς  
σωτήρῃς ὑμῖν οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὃδ' ὕστερος

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ χαῖρε, μέλαθρον πρόφυλά θ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς,  
ὥς ἄσμενός σ' ἐσεῖδον ἐς φάος μολῶν  
ἔα τί χρεῖμα, τέκν' ὀρώ πρὸ δωμαίων  
στολμοῖσι νεκρῶν κράτας ἐξεστεμμένα,  
ὄχλω τ' ἐν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον  
πατέρα τε δακρύοντα συμφορὰς τίνας,  
φέρ' ἐκπύθωμαι τῶνδε πλησίον σταθείς,  
530 τί καινὸν ἦλθε, γύναι, δώμασιν χρέος,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ φάος μολῶν πατρί—

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἦκεις, ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἔλθων φίλοις,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς, τίν' εἰς ταραγμὸν ἤκομεν, πάτερ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

διολλύμεσθα σὺν δέ, γέρον, σύγγνωθί μοι,  
εἰ πρόσθεν ἤρπασ' ἃ σέ λέγειν πρὸς τόνδ' ἐχρήν  
τὸ θῆλυ γάρ πως μᾶλλον οἰκτρὸν ἀρσένων,  
καὶ τᾶμ' ἔθνησκε τέκν', ὑπολλύμην δ' ἐγώ



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

I know not, daughter,—speechless am I struck

MEGARA

'Tis he who lay, we heard, beneath the earth,  
Except in broad day we behold a dream !  
What say I ?—see they dreams, these yearning eyes ?  
This is none other, ancient, than thy son  
Boys, hither !—hang upon your father's cloak 520  
Speed ye, unhand him not, for this is he,  
Your helper he, no worse than Saviour Zeus

*Enter HERCULES*

HERCULES

All hail, mine house, hail, portals of mine hearth !  
How blithe, returned to life, I look on you !  
Ha ! what is this ?—my sons before the halls  
In death's attire and with heads chapleted !—  
And, mid a throng of men, my very wife !—  
My father weeping over some mischance !  
Come, let me draw nigh these and question them  
Wife, what strange stroke hath fallen on mine house ? 530

MEGARA

O best-beloved !—

AMPHITRYON

To thy sue light of life ! —

MEGARA

Art come ?—art saved for friends' most desperate  
need ?

HERCULES

How ?—father, what confusion find I here ?

MEGARA

We are at point to die !—thy pardon, ancient,  
That I before thee snatch thy right of speech,  
For woman is more swift than man to mourn,  
And my sons were to die, and I was doomed

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Ἄπολλον, οἷοις φροιμίοις ἄρχει λόγου

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

τεθναῖσ' ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατὴρ οὐμὸς γέρων

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

540 ἰ πῶς φῆς , τί δράσας ἢ δορὸς ποίου τυχών ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Λύκος σφ' ὁ καινὸς γῆς ἄναξ διώλεσεν

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὄπλοις ἀπαντῶν ἢ νοσησάσης χθονός ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

στάσει τὸ Κάδμου δ' ἐπτάπυλον ἔχει κράτος

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα πρὸς σὲ καὶ γέροντ' ἦλθεν φόβος ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κτείνειν ἔμελλε πατέρα καὶ τέκνα

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς , τί ταρβῶν ὀρφάνευμ' ἐμῶν τέκνων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

μή ποτε Κρέοντος θάνατον ἐκτισαίαιτο

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κόσμος δὲ παίδων τίς ὄδε νερτέροις πρέπων ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

θανάτου τάδ' ἤδη περιβόλαι' ἐνήμεθα

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

550 καὶ πρὸς βίαν ἐθνήσκειτ' , ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

- φίλων ἔρημοι, σὲ δὲ θανόντ' ἠκούομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πόθεν δ' ἐς ὑμᾶς ἢδ' ἐσήλθ' ἀθυμία ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Εὐρυσθέως κήρυκες ἠγγελλον τάδε

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Apollo '—what strange prelude to thy speech '!

MEGARA

Dead are my brethren and my grey-haired sire

HERCULES

How ?—by what deed, or stricken by what spear ? 540

MEGARA

'Twas Lykus slew them, this land's upstart king

HERCULES

Met in fair fight ?—or plague-struck was the land ?

MEGARA

By faction stricken He rules seven-gated Thebes

HERCULES

Why fell on thee and on the old man dead ?

MEGARA

He sought to slay thy sire, thy sons, and me

HERCULES

How ?—of my fatherless children what feared he ?

MEGARA

Lest Creon's death one day they might avenge

HERCULES

This venture meet for dead folk, what means it ?

MEGARA

In this attire we shrouded us for death

HERCULES

And were to die by violence ?—woe is me ! 550

MEGARA

Forlorn of friends, we heard that thou hadst died

HERCULES

Wherefore came on you this despair of me ?

MEGARA

The heralds of Eurystheus published this

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐξελείπετ' οἶκον ἐστίαν τ' ἐμήν ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

βία, πατὴρ μὲν ἐκπεσὼν στρωτοῦ λέχους

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κοῦκ ἔσχεν αἰδῶ τὸν γέροντ' ἀτιμάσαι ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

αἰδῶ γ', ἀποικεῖ τῇσδε τῆς θεοῦ πρόσω

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔτω δ' ἀπόντες ἐσπανίζομεν φίλων ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλοι γάρ εἰσιν ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ τίνες ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

560 μάχας δὲ Μινυῶν ἅς ἔτλην, ἀπέπτυσαν ,

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἄφιλον, ἵν' αὐθὶς σοι λέγω, τὸ δυστυχές

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ ρίψεθ' Ἄιδου τάσδε περιβολὰς κόμης  
καὶ φῶς ἀναβλέψετε τοῦ κάτω σκότου  
φίλας ἀμοιβὰς ὅμμασιν δεδορκότες ,  
ἐγὼ δέ, νῦν γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔργον χερός,  
πρῶτον μὲν εἶμι καὶ κατασκάψω δόμους  
καινῶν τυράννων, κρῦτα δ' ἀνόσιον τεμῶν  
ρίψω κυνῶν ἔλκημα Καδμείων δ' ὄσους  
κακοὺς ἐφηῦρον εὖ παθόντας ἐξ ἐμοῦ,  
570 τῷ καλλινίκῳ τῷδ' ὄπλῳ χειρώσομαι  
τοὺς δὲ πτερωτοῖς διαφορῶν τοξεύμασι  
νεκρῶν ἅπαντ' Ἴσμηνὸν ἐμπλήσω φόνου,  
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα λευκὸν αἵμαχθῆσεται  
τῷ γάρ μ' ἀμύνειν μᾶλλον ἢ δάμαρτι χρὴ  
καὶ παισὶ καὶ γέροντι , χαιρόντων πόνοι  
μάτην γὰρ αὐτοὺς τῶνδε μᾶλλον ἦνυσα.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

But why did ye forsake mine home and hearth ?

MEGARA

By force thy father from his bed was flung

HERCULES

Had he no shame to outrage these grey hairs ?

MEGARA

Shame ?—from that Goddess far his dwelling is !

HERCULES

So poor of friends was I when far away !

MEGARA

Friends !—what friends hath a man unfortunate ?

HERCULES

Scorned they the fights with Minyans I endured ? 560

MEGARA

Friendless, I tell thee again, misfortune is

HERCULES

Fling from youi hair these cerements of the grave  
Look up to the light, beholding with your eyes  
Exchange right welcome from the nether-gloom  
And I—for now work lieth to mine hand—  
Will first go, and will raze to earth the house  
Of this new king, his impious head smite off  
And cast to dogs to rend Of Thebans, all  
Found traitors after my good deeds to them,  
Some will I slay with this victorious mace, 570  
And the rest scatter with my feathered shafts,  
With slaughter of corpses all Ismenus fill,  
And Dirce's pure stream red with blood shall run  
For whom should I defend above my wife  
And sons and aged sire ? Great toils, farewell !  
Vainly I wrought them, leaving these unhelped !

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

καὶ δεῖ μ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ', εἴπερ οἷδ' ὑπὲρ πατρός,  
 θνήσκειν ἀμύνοντ' ἢ τί φήσομεν καλὸν  
 580 ὕδρα μὲν ἔλθειν εἰς μάχην λέοντί τε  
 Εὐρύσθέως πομπαῖσι, τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τέκνων  
 οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον, οὐκ ἄρ' Ἡρακλῆς  
 ὁ καλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

δίκαια τοὺς τεκόντας ὠφελεῖν τέκνα  
 πατέρα τε πρέσβυν τήν τε κοινωνὸν γάμων.

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

πρὸς σοῦ μέν, ὦ παῖ, τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι φίλον  
 τά τ' ἐχθρὰ μισεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ 'πείγῃς λίαν

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐστὶ τῶνδε θᾶσσον ἢ χρεῶν, πάτερ,

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

πολλοὺς πένητας, ὀλβίους δὲ τῷ λόγῳ  
 δοκοῦντας εἶναι συμμάχους ἄναξ ἔχει,  
 590 οἳ στάσιν ἔθηκαν καὶ διώλεσαν πόλιν  
 ἐφ' ἀρπαγαῖσι τῶν πέλας, τὰ δ' ἐν δόμοις  
 δαπάναισι φροῦδα διαφυγόνθ' ὑπ' ἀργίας  
 ὥφθης ἐσελθὼν πόλιν ἐπεὶ δ' ὥφθης, ὄρα  
 ἐχθροὺς ἀθροίσας μὴ παρὰ γνώμην πέσσης.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέλει μὲν οὐδὲν εἴ με πᾶσ' εἶδεν πόλις·  
 ὄρνιν δ' ἰδὼν τιν' οὐκ ἐν αἰσίοις ἔδραις,  
 ἔγνω πόνον τιν' εἰς δόμους πεπτωκότα  
 ὥστ' ἐκ προνοίας κρύφιος εἰσῆλθον χθόνα

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

καλῶς· προσελθὼν νῦν πρόσειπέ θ' ἐστίαν  
 600 καὶ δὸς πατρώοις δώμασιν σὸν ὄμμ' ἰδεῖν.  
 ἤξει γὰρ αὐτὸς σὴν δάμαρτα καὶ τέκνα  
 ἔλξων φονεύσων καὶ ἐπισφάζων ἄναξ

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

I ought defending these to die, if these  
Die for then father —else, what honour comes  
Of hydia and of lion faced in fight  
At King Euiystheus' hests, and from my sons  
Death not averted ? How shall I be called  
Hercules the Victorious, as of old ?

580

### CHORUS

'Tis just the father should defend the sons,  
The grey sire, and the yokemate of his life

### AMPHITRYON

Son, worthy of thee it is to love thy friends,  
To hate thy foes yet be not over-rash

### HERCULES

Father, what haste unmeet is found in this ?

### AMPHITRYON \*

The king hath many an ally, lackland knaves,  
Fellows that have a name that they are rich,  
Who sowed sedition, ruining the land,  
To plunder neighbours, since their own estates,  
Squandered by wasteful idleness, were gone  
Thou wast seen entering Thebes since thou wast seen,  
Let not foes gather, and thou fall unwaies

590

### HERCULES

Though all the city saw me, naught reck I  
Yet, since I marked a bud in ominous place,  
I knew that trouble on mine house had fallen,  
And of set purpose entered secretly

### AMPHITRYON

Good go thou now, and thine hearth-gods salute,  
And show thy face to thine ancestral halls  
Himself, yon king, shall come to hale thy wife  
And sons for murder, and to slaughter me.

600

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μένοντι δ' αὐτοῦ πάντα σοι γενήσεται  
τῇ τ' ἀσφαλείᾳ κερδανεῖς· πόλιν δὲ σὴν  
μὴ πρὶν ταραξῆς πρὶν τόδ' εὖ θέσθαι, τέκνον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δράσω τάδ' εὖ γὰρ εἶπας εἴμ' εἴσω δόμων  
χρόνῳ δ' ἀνελθὼν ἐξ ἀνηλίων μυχῶν  
Ἄιδου Κόρης τ' ἔνερθεν, οὐκ ἀτιμάσω  
θεοὺς προσειπεῖν πρῶτα τοὺς κατὰ στέγας

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

610 ἦλθες γὰρ ὄντως δώματ' εἰς Ἄιδου, τέκνον ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ θῆρά γ' εἰς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἤγαγον

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

μάχῃ κρατήσας ἥ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν ,

• ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μάχῃ· τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὄργι' ἠντύχῃσ' ἰδών.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἦ καὶ κατ' οἴκους ἐστὶν Εὐρυσθέως ὁ θήρ ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Χθονίας νιν ἄλσος Ἑρμιῶν τ' ἔχει πόλις

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐδ' οἶδεν Εὐρυσθεύς σε γῆς ἤκουτ' ἄνω ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδεν· ἦλθον τάνθ' ἀδ' εἰδέναί πάρος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

χρόνον δὲ πῶς τοσοῦτον ἦσθ' ὑπὸ χθονί ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησέα κομίζων ἐχρόνισ' ἐξ Ἄιδου, πάτερ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

620 καὶ ποῦ 'στιν , ἥ γῆς πατρίδος οἴχεται πέδον ,



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

If here thou bide, all shall go well with thee,  
And thou shalt gain in surety   Stu not up  
Thy city, ere thou hast ordered all things well

HERCULES

I will well said   I pass mine halls within  
Returned at last from sunless nether crypts  
Of Hades and The Maid,<sup>1</sup> I will not slight  
The Gods, but hail them first beneath my roof

AMPHITRYON

Son, didst thou verily go to Hades' halls? 610

HERCULES

Yea; the three-headed hound I brought to light

AMPHITRYON

Vanquished in fight, or by the Goddess given?

HERCULES

In fight   I had seen the Mysteries—well for me

AMPHITRYON

How? is the monster in Eurystheus' halls?

HERCULES

Nay, in Demeter's Grove, in Hermion's town

AMPHITRYON

Nor knows Eurystheus thou art risen to day?

HERCULES

Nay, hither first, to know your state, I came

AMPHITRYON

How wast thou so long time beneath the earth?

HERCULES

From Hades rescuing Theseus, tairied I

AMPHITRYON

Where is he? Hath he passed to his fatherland? 620

<sup>1</sup> Persephone, whose name it was perilous to utter

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

βέβηκ' Ἀθήνας, νέρθεν ἄσμενος φυγών  
 ἀλλ' εἴ, ὁμαρτεῖτ', ὦ τέκν', εἰς δόμους πατρί·  
 καλλιονές τάρ' εἰσοδοὶ τῶν ἐξόδων  
 πάρεισιν ὑμῖν ἀλλὰ θάρσος ἴσχετε  
 καὶ νάματ' ὅσσων μηκέτ' ἐξανίετε,  
 σύ τ', ὦ γύναι μοι, σύλλογον ψυχῆς λαβέ  
 τρόμον τε παῦσαι, καὶ μέθεσθ' ἐμῶν πέπλων  
 οὐ γὰρ πτερωτὸς οὐδὲ φευξείω φίλους  
 ἂ,  
 οἷδ' οὐκ ἀφιάσ', ἀλλ' ἀνάπτονται πέπλων  
 630 τοσφῶδε μᾶλλον ὧδ' ἔβητ' ἐπὶ ξυροῦ,  
 ἄξω λαβῶν γε τούσδ' ἐφολκίδας χεροῖν,  
 ναῦς δ' ὡς ἐφέλξω καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀναίνομαι  
 θεράπευμα τέκνων πάντα τ' ἀνθρώπων ἴσα  
 φιλοῦσι παῖδας οἳ τ' ἀμείνονες βροτῶν  
 οἳ τ' οὐδὲν ὄντες χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι  
 ἔχουσιν, οἳ δ' οὐ· πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένος

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀ νεότας μοι φίλον ἄχθος δὲ τὸ γῆρας αἰεὶ στρ α'  
 βαρύτερον Αἴτνας σκοπέλων  
 640 ἐπὶ κρατὶ κεῖται,  
 βλεφάρων σκοτεινὸν  
 φάρος ἐπικαλύψαν  
 μή μοι μήτ' Ἀσιήτιδος  
 τυραννίδος ὄλβος εἴη,  
 μή χρυσοῦ δώματα πλήρη  
 τᾶς ἥβας ἀντιλαβεῖν,  
 ἂ καλλίστα μὲν ἐν ὄλβῳ,  
 καλλίστα δ' ἐν πενίᾳ  
 τὸ δὲ λυγρὸν φόνιόν τε γῆ-

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### HERCULES

To Athens, glad to have 'scaped the underworld  
Come, children, follow to the house your sire,  
For fairer to you is your entering-in  
Than your outgoing Nay then, pluck up heart,  
And shed the tear-floods from your eyes no more,  
And rally thou, my wife, thy fainting spirit,  
From trembling cease, and ye, let go my cloak  
I am no winged thing, nor would I fly my friends  
Ha!

These let not go, but hang upon my cloak  
Only the more! Was doom so imminent then? 630  
E'en must I lead them clinging to mine hands,  
As ship that tows her boats Not I reject  
Care of my sons Men's hearts be all like-framed  
They love their babes, as well the nobler sort,  
As they that are but naught In wealth they differ,  
These have, those lack their children all men love  
[*Exeunt HERCULES, AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and children*

### CHORUS

Ah, sweet is youth!—but always eld, (Str 1)  
On mine head weighing, downward drags,  
A heavier load than lay the crags  
Of Etna on the Titan quelled, 640

Muffling mine eyes in mantle-fold  
Of gloom Not mine be wealth that lies  
In Asian tyrants' treasures,  
Not mine be halls of hoarded gold,

If forfeit youth for these must fleet—  
Youth, fairest gem of high estate,  
In lowliness most fair! I hate  
Age, dark with death's on-coming feet.

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

650 ρας μισῶ κατὰ κυμάτων δ'  
ἔρροι, μηδέ ποτ' ὠφέλεν  
θνατῶν δώματα καὶ πόλεις  
ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ κατ' αἰθέρ' ἀ-  
εὶ πτεροῖσι φορεῖσθω

εἰ δὲ θεοῖς ἦν ξύνεσις καὶ σοφία κατ' ἀνδρας, ἀντ. α  
δίδυμον ἂν ἦβαν ἔφερον  
φανερὸν χαρακτῆρ'  
ἀρετᾶς ὅσοισιν  
660 μέτα, κατθανόντες τ'  
εἰς αὐγὰς πάλιν αἰλίου  
δισσοὺς ἂν ἔβαν διαύλους,  
ἀ δυσγένεια δ' ἀπλᾶν ἂν  
εἶχε ζωᾶς βιοτάν,  
καὶ τῷδ' ἦν τοὺς τε κακοὺς ἂν  
γινῶναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς,  
ἴσον ἅτ' ἐν νεφέλαισιν ἄ-  
στρων ναύταις ἀριθμὸς πέλει  
νῦν δ' οὐδεὶς ὄρος ἐκ θεῶν  
670 χρηστοῖς οὐδὲ κακοῖς σαφής,  
ἀλλ' εἰλίσσόμενός τις αἰ-  
ὼν πλοῦτον μόνον αὔξει

οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας  
Μούσαις συγκαταμιγνύς,  
ἀδίσταν συζυγίαν  
μὴ ζῶην μετ' ἀμουσίας,  
αἰεὶ δ' ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἶην  
ἔτι τοι γέρων ἀοιδὸς  
κελαδεῖ Μναμοσύναν

στρ. β'

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Deep be it drowned 'neath storm-waves' stress ' 650  
Ah, would that ne'er such visitant  
Had come, men's homes and towns to haunt,  
That yet its wings flew shelterless !

If wisdom, as of sons of earth, (Ant 1)  
And understanding, dwelt in heaven,  
Twice o'er the boon of youth were given,  
Seal manifest of manhood's worth

On all true hearts these from the grave  
To the sun's light again should climb, 660  
To run their course a second time  
One life alone the vile should have

Then, who are evil, who are good,  
By such a sigh might all men learn,  
As shipmen 'twixt the clouds discern  
The star-host's marshalled multitude

But now, no line clear-severing  
'Twixt good and bad the Gods have drawn 670  
Wealth, as the rolling years sweep on,  
Is all the blessing that they bring

(St 2)  
The Muses shall for me be twined for ever with the  
Graces  
For evermore my song shall pour that sweetest  
union's praises  
No life be mine of songless clown,  
But, where for singers shines the crown,  
Mine old lips still shall hymn renown of Memory's  
fair creation.

680 ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους  
καλλίνικον αἰίδω  
παρά τε Βρόμιον οἶνοδόταν  
παρά τε χέλυνος ἑπτατόνου  
μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν  
οὔπω καταπαύσομεν  
Μούσας, αἶ μ' ἐχόρευσαν.

690 παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες  
ὑμνοῦσ' ἄμφι πύλας τὸν  
Λατοῦς εὐπαιδα γόνον  
εἰλίσσουσαι καλλίχορον  
παιᾶνας δ' ἐπὶ σοῖς μελάνθοις  
κύκνος ὧς γέρων ἀοιδὸς  
πολιᾶν ἐκ γενύων  
κελαδήσω τὸ γὰρ εὖ  
τοῖς ὕμνοισιν ὑπάρχει,  
Διὸς ὁ παῖς τὸ δ' εὐγενίας  
κλέος ὑπερβάλλων [ἀρεταῖς]  
μοχθήσας τὸν ἄκυμον  
700 θήκεν βίοτον βροτοῖς  
πέρσας δείματα θηρῶν

ἀντ β'

ΛΥΚΟΣ

εἰς καιρὸν οἴκων, Ἀμφιτρύων, ἔξω περᾶς  
χρόνος γὰρ ἤδη δαρὸς ἐξ ὅτου πέπλοις  
κοσμεῖσθε σῶμα καὶ νεκρῶν ἀγάλμασιν  
ἄλλ' εἶα, παῖδας καὶ δάμαρθ' Ἡρακλέους  
ἔξω κέλευε τῶνδε φαίνεσθαι δόμων,  
ἐφ' οἷς ὑπέστητ' αὐτεπάγγελτοι θανεῖν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἄναξ, διώκεις μ' ἀθλίως πεπραγότα  
ὑβριν θ' ὑβρίζεις ἐπὶ θανούσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Great Hercules the triumph-crowned my song 680  
 extolleth ever, [wine-giver,  
 In feasts my theme, where beakers gleam of Bromius  
 And where the lyre of sevenfold string  
 Sounds, and where Libyan flutes outring  
 Ceaseless I'll hear the Muses sing, queens of my  
 inspiration

(*Ant 2*)

As maids of Delos chant the pæan's holy strain im-  
 mortal, [Leto's scion's portal,  
 Whose white feet glance as sweeps the dance round 690  
 So will I raise the pæan-lay,  
 Swan-song of singer hoary-grey  
 The portals of thine halls to-day shall hear the old  
 lips chanting

Proud theme hath minstrelsy, to sing mine hero's  
 high achieving [mounts, far-leaving  
 He is Zeus' son, but deeds hath done whose glory  
 The praise of birth divine behind,  
 Whose toils gave peace to humankind,  
 Slaying dread shapes that filled man's mind with  
 terrible ceaseless-haunting 700

*Enter LYCUS, attended Re-enter AMPHITRYON*

LYCUS

So!—in good time, Amphitryon, com'st thou forth  
 Ye have tarried all too long as ye arrayed  
 Your limbs in robes and trappings of the grave  
 Haste, bid the sons and wife of Hercules  
 To show themselves forth-coming from these halls,  
 By your self-tendered covenant to die

AMPHITRYON

King, thou dost trample on my misery  
 Thou heapest insult on the heart bereaved

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

710 ἂ χρεὴν σε μετρίως, κεί κρατεῖς, σπουδὴν ἔχειν  
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνάγκην προστίθης ἡμῖν θανεῖν,  
στέργειν ἀνάγκη, δραστέον θ' ἂ σοὶ δοκεῖ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα Μεγάρα, ποῦ τέκν' Ἀλκμήνης γόνου,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

δοκῶ μὲν αὐτήν, ὥς θύραθεν εἰκάσαι,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δόξης; τοῦ δ'<sup>1</sup> ἔχεις τεκμήριον,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰκέτιν πρὸς ἀγνοῖς Ἑστίας θάσσειν βάθροις,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἀνόνητά γ' ἰκετεύουσαν ἐκσῶσαι βίον

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ τὸν θανόντα γ' ἀνακαλεῖν μάτην πόσιν

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὁ δ' οὐ πάρεστιν οὐδὲ μὴ μόλη ποτέ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὔκ, εἴ γε μή τις θεῶν ἀναστήσειέ νιν.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

720 χώρει πρὸς αὐτὴν κακκόμιζ' ἐκ δωμαίων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μέτοχος ἂν εἶην τοῦ φόνου δράσας τόδε.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἡμεῖς, ἐπειδὴ σοὶ τόδ' ἔστ' ἐνθύμιον,  
οἱ δειμάτων ἔξωθεν ἐκπορεύσομεν  
σὺν μητρὶ παῖδας δεῦρ' ἔπεσθε, πρόσπολοι,  
ὥς ἂν σχολὴν λύσωμεν ἄσμενοι πόνων.

<sup>1</sup> Murray for MSS δόξης τῆσδ'



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

So strong and so impatient fits not thee  
But, since of force thou doomest me to die, 710  
Of force must I content me and do thy will

LYCUS

And Megara, and Alcmena's son's blood—where ?

AMPHITRYON

I think that she—if one without may guess—

LYCUS

What of thy *thinking* ? What dost know by proof ?

AMPHITRYON

At the Hearth-goddess' altar suppliant sits,—

LYCUS

With bootless prayer to heaven to save her life !

AMPHITRYON

And vainly calleth on a husband dead

LYCUS

Not here is he, nor shall he ever come

AMPHITRYON

Never,—except by a God raised from the dead

LYCUS

Go thou to her, and bring her forth the halls 720

AMPHITRYON

So doing were I partaker in her blood !

LYCUS

I then,—since this lies heavy on thy soul,—  
Who am past all fear, will bring forth with her sons  
This mother Henchmen, hither, follow me,  
With joy to sweep this hindrance from our path

[*Exit*]

# ΗΡΑΗΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

## ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

730

σὺ δ' οὖν ἴθ', ἔρχει δ' οἱ χρεῶν τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἴσως  
 ἄλλῳ μελήσει. προσδόκα δε δρῶν κακῶς  
 κακὸν τι πράξειν. ὦ γέροντες, εἰς καλὸν  
 στείχει, βρόχοισι δ' ἀρκύων γενήσεται  
 ξιφηφόροισι, τοὺς πέλας δοκῶν κτενεῖν  
 ὁ παγκάκιστος εἶμι δ' ὡς ἴδω νεκρὸν  
 πίπτουτ' ἔχει γὰρ ἡδονὰς θνήσκων ἀνὴρ  
 ἐχθρὸς τίνων τε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

α μεταβολὰ κακῶν μέγας ὁ πρόσθ' ἄναξ στρ α  
 πάλιν ὑποστρέφει βίοτον εἰς Αἶδαν

β'. ἰὼ δίκαι καὶ θεῶν παλίσρους πότμος

740 γ' ἦλθες χρόνῳ μὲν οὗ δίκην δώσεις θανόν,

δ'. ὕβρεις ὑβρίζων εἰς ἀμείνονας σέθεν

ε' χαρμοναὶ δακρύων ἔδοσαν ἐκβολάς

στ'. πάλιν ἔμολεν ἂ πάρος οὐποτε διὰ φρενὸς  
 ἥλπισεν παθεῖν γὰρ ἄναξ

ζ' ἄλλ', ὦ γεραιοί, καὶ τὰ δωμάτων ἔσω  
 σκοπῶμεν, εἰ πράσσει τις ὥς ἐγὼ θέλω,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### AMPHITRYON

Go thou where doom leads For the rest, perchance,  
Another shall take thought Look thou for ill  
To suffer ill! Old friends, in happy hour  
He paceth on in toils of snaring swords  
Shall he be trapped who thought to slay his neighbours, 730  
The utter-vile! I go to see him fall  
Dead Joy it is to see an enemy  
Die, suffering vengeance for his ill-deeds done [*Exit*  
*The members of the Chorus chant successively*

### CHORUS 1

Ho for requital of wrong! the king who was great  
heretofore (Str 1)  
Backward is turning the path of his life unto Hades' [door!]

### CHORUS 2

Hail, justice and river of fate back-turning with re-  
fluent roar!

### CHORUS 3

Thou com'st at last to pay death's penalty— 740

### CHORUS 4

For outrage done to better men than thee

### CHORUS 5

Gladness constraineth the fountain of tears from mine  
eyelids to start

### CHORUS 6

Come is the hour which the land's king never ere  
this in his heart  
Foresaw,—retribution's vengeance-smart!

### CHORUS 7

Old friends, look we within the halls, to see  
Our soul's desire upon our enemy.

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

750 ἦ' τόδε κατάρχεται μέλος ἔμοι κλύειν ἄντ' α'  
φίλιον ἐν δόμοις· θάνατος οὐ πόρσω.

θ'. βοᾷ φόνου φροίμιον στενάζων ἄναξ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὦ πᾶσα Κάδμου γαῖ', ἀπόλλυμαι δόλῳ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰ' καὶ γὰρ διώλλυς· ἀντίποινα δ' ἐκτίνων  
τόλμα, διδούς γε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ια'. τίς ὁ θεοὺς ἀνομία χραίνων, θνητὸς ὢν,  
ἄφρονα λόγον οὐρανίων μακάρων κατέβαλ',  
ὥς ἄρ' οὐ σθένουσιν θεοί,

760 ιβ' γέροντες, οὐκέτ' ἔστι δυσσεβῆς ἀνὴρ.  
σιγᾷ μέλαθρα πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα  
φίλοι γὰρ εὐτυχοῦσιν οὐς ἐγὼ θέλω.

χοροὶ χοροὶ καὶ θαλῖαι στρ. β'  
μέλουνσι Θήβας ἱερὸν κατ' ἄστρ  
μεταλλαγαὶ γὰρ δακρύων,  
μεταλλαγαὶ συντυχίας  
[νέας] ἔτεκον ἀοιδάς.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

LYCUS (*within*)

*Ah me ! Woe's me !*

CHORUS 8

(*Ant* 1)

Hark to the outburst !—as music it is for mine ears 750  
to hear [is exceeding near  
That strain ringing sweet through the halls lo, death

CHORUS 9

This king shrieketh prelude of slaughter he  
shrieketh in anguish of fear

LYCUS (*within*)

*Oh Cadmus' land, by treachery am I slain !*

CHORUS 10

As thou wouldst slay Flinch not from vengeance-  
pain

Thine own deeds' retribution dost thou gain

CHORUS 11

Who was it, in lawlessness flouting the Gods, that  
mortal wight

Who in folly blasphemed the Blessèd that reign in  
the heaven's height,

Saying that Gods be void of might ?

CHORUS 12

Our foe is not —such doom the impious earn 760

Hushed are the halls Now unto dances turn

Blest are the dead ones over whom I yearn

CHORUS

(*Str* 2)

The dances, the dances are peeling, the shout of the  
banqueters pealing

Through Thebes, through the city divine  
Now from affliction of tears cometh severance,

Now from the thralldom of woe is deliverance,

And song is then heir

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βέβακ' ἄναξ ὁ καινός,  
 ὁ δὲ παλαιότερος  
 770 κρατεῖ, λιμένα λιπών γε τὸν Ἀχερόντιον  
 δοκημάτων ἐκτὸς ἦλθεν ἐλπίς

θεοὶ θεοὶ τῶν ἀδίκων ἀντ β'  
 μέλουσι καὶ τῶν ὀσίων ἐπάειν  
 ὁ χρυσὸς ἅ τ' εὐτυχία  
 φρενῶν βροτοὺς ἐξάγεται,  
 δύνασιν ἀδικὸν ἐφέλκων  
 χρόνου γὰρ οὔτις ἔτλα  
 τὸ πάλιν εἰσορᾶν  
 780 νόμον παρέμενος, ἀνομία χάριν διδούς,  
 ἔθραυσεν ὄλβου κελευνὸν ἄρμα

Ἴσμήν' ὦ στεφαναφόρει, στρ γ'  
 ξεσταί θ' ἐπταπύλου πόλεως  
 ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγνυαί,  
 Δίρκα θ' ἅ καλλιρρέεθρος,  
 σύν τ' Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι,  
 πατρὸς ὕδωρ βᾶτε λιποῦ-  
 σαι συναοιδοί,  
 Νύμφαι, τὸν Ἡρακλέους  
 790 καλλίνικον ἀγών' ὦ  
 Πυθίου δενδρῶτι πέτρα  
 Μουσῶν θ' Ἑλικωνιάδων δώματα,  
 ἤξετ' εὐγαθεῖ κελάδῳ  
 ἐμὰν πόλιν ἐμά τε τείχη,

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Gone is the tyrant, the upstart craven,  
And enthroned is the ancient line  
Re-avisen from Hades' dear ghost-haven 770  
Hope springs from despair

(Ant 2)

The Gods, O the Gods now are sealing unrighteous-  
ness' doom, and revealing

The right, their eternal design [victorious  
But Gold and Fan-fortune, with Power the  
Harnessed beside them, in folly vainglorious

Hurry man to his doom —  
Law he outpaceth, and Lawlessness lasheth  
To speed, nor his heart doth incline  
To take heed to the end—lo, his car sudden-  
crasheth

Shattered in gloom <sup>1</sup> 780

Deck thee with garlands, Ismenus, and ye (St 3)

Break forth into dancing,  
Streets stately with Thebes' fan masonry,  
And Dirce bright-glancing

Come, Maids of Asopus, to us, from the spring

Come ye of your father,  
Of Hercules' glorious triumph to sing,  
Nymph-chorus, O gather

Pythian forest-peak, Helicon's steep 790

Of the Song-queens haunted,  
To my town, to my walls, let the song-echoes leap  
Of the strains loud-chanted—

<sup>1</sup> The presumptuous wrong doer is compared to a reckless charioteer in a race in which he tries to outstrip the rival chariot of Law His four horses are Gold and Prosperity as yoke horses, with Power and Lawlessness for trace-horses

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Σπαρτῶν ἵνα γένος ἐφάνη,  
χαλκασπίδων λόχος, ὃς γὰν  
τέκνων τέκνοις μεταμείβει,  
Θήβαις ἱερὸν φῶς

ὦ λέκτρων δύο συγγενεῖς ἀντ. γ'

800

εὐναί, θνατογενοῦς τε καὶ  
Διός, ὃς ἦλθεν ἐς εὐνάς  
Νύμφας τᾶς Περσηίδος· ὥς  
πιστόν μοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἤ-  
δη λέχος, ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν οὐκ  
ἐπ' ἐλπίδι φάνθη,

λαμπρὰν δ' ἔδειξ' ὁ χρόνος  
τὰν Ἡρακλέος ἀλκὰν

ὃς γὰς ἐξέβα θαλάμῳ,

Πλούτωνος δῶμα λιπὼν νέρτερον  
κρείσσων μοι τύραννος ἔφυς

810

ἢ δυσγένει' ἀνάκτων·

ἂ νῦν ἐσορᾶν φαίνει

ξιφηφόρων ἐς ἀγώνων

ἄμιλλαν, εἰ τὸ δίκαιον

θεοῖς ἔτ' ἀρέσκει

ἔα ἔα

ἄρ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν πίτυλον ἤκομεν φόβου,

γέροντες, οἷον φάσμι' ὑπὲρ δόμων ὀρώ ,

φυγῇ φυγῇ

νωθὲς πέδαιρε κῶλον, ἐκποδὼν ἔλα

820

ῶναξ Παιάν,

ἀπότροπος γένοιό μοι πημάτων



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To my town, whence the Dragon-seed rose to the  
day,

The warrior nation,  
Whose sons guard the fathers' inheritance aye,  
Thebes' light of salvation

Hail to the couch where the spousals divine (*Ant 3*)  
With the mortal were blended,  
Where for love of the Lady of Perseus' line 800  
Zeus' glory descended !

For thy bridal of old is my faith, Zeus, won,  
Though I held it a story  
Past credence by time is the might of thy son  
Revealed in its glory

He hath burst from earth's dungeons, hath lifted  
the chain  
Of Pluto's deep prison !  
Thou art worthier to rule than the churl-king  
slam,  
O my King re-arsen ! 810

For now the usurper hath proved, when in fight  
The sword-wielders have striven,  
Whether yet, as in old time, the cause of the right  
Is well-pleasing to heaven

*The forms of IRIS and MADNESS appear above the palace*

Ha see ! ha see !  
On you, on me, doth this same panic fall ?  
Old friends, what phantom hovereth o'er the hall ?  
Ah flee ! ah flee  
With haste of laggard feet !—speed thou away !  
Healer, to thee, 820  
O King, to avert from me yon bane I pray !

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

### ΙΡΙΣ

θαρσεῖτε Νυκτὸς τήνδ' ὀρώντες ἔκγονον  
 Λύσαν, γέροντες, καὶ μὲ τὴν θεῶν λάτριν  
 Ἴριν πόλει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἤκομεν βλάβος,  
 ἐνὸς δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὸς δώματα στρατεύομεν,  
 ὃν φασιν εἶναι Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τ' ἄπο  
 πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ἄθλους ἐκτελευτῆσαι πικρούς,  
 τὸ χρή νιν ἐξέσωζεν, οὐδ' εἶα πατὴρ  
 Ζεὺς νιν κακῶς δρᾶν οὔτ' ἔμ' οὔθ' Ἦραν ποτέ  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθους διεπέρασ' Εὐρυσθέως,  
 Ἦρα προσάψαι κοινὸν αἶμ' αὐτῷ θέλει  
 παῖδας κατακτείναντι, συνθέλω δ' ἐγὼ  
 ἀλλ' εἴ, ἄτεγκτον συλλαβοῦσα καρδίαν,  
 Νυκτὸς κελαινῆς ἀνυμέναιε παρθένε,  
 μανίας τ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ παιδοκτόνους  
 φρενῶν ταραγμούς καὶ ποδῶν σκιρτήματα  
 ἔλαυνε, κίνει, φόνιον ἐξίλει κάλων,  
 ὡς ἂν πορεύσας δι' Ἀχερούσιον πόρον  
 τὸν καλλίπαιδα στέφανον αὐθέντη φόνῳ  
 γυνῇ μὲν τὸν Ἦρας οἶός ἐστ' αὐτῷ χόλος,  
 μάθῃ δὲ τὸν ἐμόν ἢ θεοὶ μὲν οὐδαμοῦ,  
 τὰ θνητὰ δ' ἔσται μεγάλα, μὴ δόντος δίκην.

### ΛΥΣΣΑ

ἐξ εὐγενοῦς μὲν πατρὸς ἔκ τε μητέρος  
 πέφυκα, Νυκτὸς Οὐρανοῦ τ' ἀφ' αἵματος  
 τιμᾶς δ' ἔχω τάσδ', οὐκ ἀγασθῆναι φίλοις,  
 οὐδ' ἡδομαι φοιτῶσ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φόνους<sup>1</sup>  
 παραινέσαι δέ, πρὶν σφαλεῖσαν εἰσιδεῖν,  
 Ἦρα θέλω σοί τ', ἦν πίθησθ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις  
 ἀνὴρ ὃδ' οὐκ ἄσημος οὔτ' ἐπὶ χθονὶ

<sup>1</sup> Dobree for MSS φίλους Adopted by Dindorf, Paley, and Gray and Hutchinson

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

### IRIS

Fear not this is the child of Night ye see,  
Madness, grey sires I, handmaid of the Gods,  
Iris We come not for your city's hurt,  
Only on one man's house do we make war—  
His, whom Zeus' and Alcmena's son they call  
For, till he had ended all his bitter toils,  
Fate shielded him, and Father Zeus would not  
That I, or Hera, wrought him ever harm  
But, now he hath toiled Eurystheus' labours through, 830  
Hera will stain him with the blood of kin,  
That he shall slay his sons · her will is mine

On then, close up thine heart from touch of ruth,  
O thou unwedded child of murky Night  
With madness thrill this man, with soul-turmoil  
Child-murdering, with wild boundings of the feet :  
Goad him, the sheets of murder's sails let out,  
That, when o'er Acheron's ferry his own hand  
In blood hath sped his crown of goodly sons,  
Then may he learn how dread is Hera's wrath, 840  
And mine, against him else the Gods must wane  
And mortals wax, if he taste not her vengeance

### MADNESS

Of noble sire and mother was I born,  
Even of the blood of Uranus and Night  
But not to do despite to friends I hold  
My powers, nor love to haunt for murder's sake  
Fain would I plead with Hera and with thee,  
Ere she have erred, if ye will heed my words  
This man, against whose house ye thrust me on,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

850 οὐτ' ἐν θεοῖσιν, οὐ γέ μ' εἰσπέμπεις δόμους·  
ἄβατον δὲ χώραν καὶ θάλασσαν ἀγρίαν  
ἐξημερώσας, θεῶν ἀνέστησεν μόνος  
τιμὰς πιτνούσας ἀνοσίων ἀνδρῶν ὑπο·  
ὥστ' <sup>1</sup> οὐ παραινῶ μεγάλα βούλεσθαι κακά.

ΙΡΙΣ

μὴ σὺ νουθέτει τά θ' Ἥρας κἀμὰ μηχανήματα.

ΛΤΣΣΑ

εἰς τὸ λῶστον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἵχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ  
κακοῦ

ΙΡΙΣ

οὐχὶ σωφρονεῖν γ' ἔπεμψε δευρό σ' ἡ Διὸς δάμαρ

ΛΤΣΣΑ

Ἥλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρῶσ' ἃ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι  
εἰ δὲ δὴ μ' Ἥρα θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαίως  
ἔχει

860 τάχος ἐπιρροίβδην θ' ὁμαρτεῖν ὡς κυνηγέτη κύνας,  
εἰμὶ γ' οὔτε πόντος οὔτω κύμασι στένων λάβρος  
οὔτε γῆς σεισμὸς κεραυνοῦ τ' οἷστρος ὠδῖνας  
πνέων,

οἷ ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἥρα-  
κλέους

καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ,  
τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρῶτον· ὁ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ  
εἴσεται

παῖδας οὓς ἔτικτ' ἐναίρων, πρὶν ἂν ἐμὰς λύσσας  
ἀφῇ.

ἦν ἰδοῦ· καὶ δὴ τινάσσει κρᾶτα βαλβίδων ἄπο,  
καὶ διαστρόφους ἐλίσσει σίγα γοργωποὺς κόρας.  
ἄμπνοαὸς δ' οὐ σωφρονίζει, ταῦρος ὥς ἐς ἐμβολήν

<sup>1</sup> Musgrave for MSS σοί τ'

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Nor on the earth is fameless, nor in heaven  
The pathless land, the wild sea, hath he tamed,  
And the God's honours hath alone restored,  
When these by impious men were overthrown  
Therefore I plead, devise no monstrous wrong

850

IRIS

Dare not with thine admonitions trammel Heia's  
schemes and mine !

MADNESS

Nay, I do but point a pathway meeter far to tread  
than thine

IRIS

Not to flaunt thy temperance hath she sent thee,  
Zeus's bride divine

MADNESS

Witness, Sun, that I am doing that which I would  
fain refuse .

[not choose,

Yet, if I must work thy will and Hera's—if I may  
But with skirr of rushing footfalls follow you like

860

hunter's pack,

[ruin-wrack,

On will I, nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such  
No, nor earthquake, no, nor madding thunder's gasp-  
ing agonies,

As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Hercules  
I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls —his  
children first

[his murder-thrust

I will slay, nor shall the murderer know he slakes  
On the children of his body, till my madness' course  
is run

[begun !

See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race  
See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly  
rolled !

[controlled

Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings un-

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOS

870 δεινὰ μυκᾶται δὲ Κῆρας ἀνακαλῶν τὰς Ταρ-  
 τάρου [φόβῳ  
 τάχα σ' ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ καταυλήσω  
 στείχ' ἐς Οὐλυμπον πεδαίρουσ', Ἴρι, γενναῖον  
 πόδα [κλέους  
 εἰς δόμους δ' ἡμεῖς ἄφαντοι δυσόμεσθ' Ἑρα-

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅποτοτοῖ, στέναξον ἀποκείρεται  
σὸν ἄνθος πόλεος, ὁ Διὸς ἔκγονος.  
μέλεος Ἑλλάς, ἃ τὸν εὐεργέταν  
ἀποβαλεῖς, ὀλεῖς μανιάσιν λύσσαις  
χορευθέντ' ἀναύλοις.

880 βέβακεν ἐν δίφροισιν ἅ πολύστονος,  
ἄρμασι δ' ἐνδίδωσι  
κέντρον ὥς ἐπὶ λῶβα  
Νυκτὸς Γοργῶν ἑκατογκεφάλοις  
ῥφεων ἰαχήμασι, Λύσσα μαρμαρωπός.

ταχὺ τὸν εὐτυχῇ μετέβαλεν δαίμων,  
ταχὺ δὲ πρὸς πατὸς τέκν' ἐκπνεύσεται  
ἰὼ μοι μέλεος,  
ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν γένος ἄγονον αὐτίκα  
λυσσάδες ὠμοβρώτες ἀποινόδικοι δίκαι

890 *κακοῖσιν ἐκπετάσουσιν ἰὼ στέγαι,  
κατάρχεται χόρευμα τυμπάνων ἄτερ,  
οὐ βρομῶ κεχαρισμένα θύρῳ,*

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Awfully he bellows, howling to the fateful fiends of 870  
 hell ' [appalling knell ']

Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's  
 —Ay, unto Olympus soaring, Iris, tread thy path  
 serene ' [unseen]

Mine the task into the halls of Hercules to plunge  
 [IRIS ascends, and MADNESS enters the palace]

### CHORUS

Alas and alas ' cry out, O town,  
 For thy goodliest flower, Zeus' son, mown down '  
 Thy champion shall slip from thine hands, to thy  
 bitter cost,  
 Hellas, in frenzied dances of madness tossed  
 Where the flute sounds not, he is lost to thee,  
 lost '

She hath mounted her car, groans throng in her  
 train ;

She is goading her horses on mission of bane , 880  
 Night's daughter, a Gorgon with hundred-headed hiss  
 Of her serpents, Madness the glittering-eyed is this

Swiftly hath fortune o'erthrown him who sat on high  
 Swiftly the sons by the father's hand shall die

Ah misery ' Zeus, mad vengeance i' venomous-wild  
 Straightway, athirst for requital, with evils on evils  
 piled, [not thy child  
 Shall trample thy son unto dust, as though he were

Woe for the palace-dome ']

Her dance is beginning, but not with the cymbals  
 clashing, 890

Not with the pine-wand uptossed amid loud accla-  
 mation,—

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἰὼ δόμοι,  
πρὸς αἵματ', οὐχὶ τᾶς Διονυσιάδος  
βοτρυῶν ἐπὶ χεύμασι λοιβᾶς.

φυγῇ, τέκν', ἐξορμᾶτε δάιον τόδε  
δάιον μέλος ἐπαυλεῖται.  
κυναγετεῖ τέκνων διωγμόν·  
οὔποτ' ἄκραντα δόμοισι Λύσσα βακχεύσει

900 αἰαῖ κακῶν  
αἰαῖ δῆτα τὸν γεραιὸν ὥς στένω  
πατέρα, τάν τε παιδοτρόφον, ᾧ μάταν  
τέκεα γεννᾶται

ἰδού ἰδού,  
θύελλα σείει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη  
ἢ ἢ, τί δρᾶς, ὦ Διὸς παῖ , μελάθρων  
τάραγμα ταρτάρειον, ὥς  
ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ ποτὲ Παλλάς, εἰς δόμους πέμπεις

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ λευκὰ γήρα σώματ',

ΧΟΡΟΣ

910 ἀνακαλεῖς τίνα με τίνα βοάν ,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλαστα τὰν δόμοισι

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάντιν οὐχ ἕτερον ἄξομαι



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Woe for a hero's home !—  
But for shedding of blood, not the blood of the grape  
glad-plashing [oblation  
As the banqueters pour it forth for the Wine-god's

Away, O ye children, in flight, for death,  
Death shrieks through her pipe by the blast of  
her breath !

[*Cries and sound of rushing within*]

Like a hound is he holding the children in chase !—  
Never shall Madness keep revel for naught through  
his dwelling-place

Woe, anguish and pain !  
Woe and alas for the silver hair 900  
Of his father !—woe for the mother who bare  
His babes in vain !

[*Sound of battering and rending within*]

Lo you, lo you !  
A whirlwind is shaking the house—its roofs fall  
crashing—

Ah what, ah what, Zeus' Son, wouldst thou do ?  
Down on thy palace the turmoil of hell art thou  
dashing, [Enceladus flashing

As the levin from Pallas's hand to the heart of  
*Enter SERVANT from within*

SERVANT

O reverend presences hoary-white—

CHORUS

What meaneth thy cry unto me—thy cry of fear ? 910

SERVANT

Within yon halls is a fearful sight !

CHORUS

No need, to attest thy tale, that we seek to a see

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τεθνᾶσι παῖδες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

στενάζεθ', ὡς στενακτά

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δαίοι φόνοι,

δαίοι δὲ τοκέων χεῖρες.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν τις εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ πεπόνθαμεν

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς παισὶ στενακτὰν ἄταν ἄταν

πατέρος ἀμφαίνεις,

λέγε τίνα τρόπον ἔσυτο θεόθεν ἐπὶ

920

μέλαθρα κακὰ τάδε

τλήμονάς τε παίδων τύχας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἰερὰ μὲν ἦν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Διός

καθάρσι' οἴκων, γῆς ἄνακτ' ἐπεὶ κτανῶν

ἐξέβαλε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἡρακλῆς

χορὸς δὲ καλλίμορφος εἰστήκει τέκνων

πατὴρ τε Μεγάρα τ' ἐν κύκλῳ δ' ἤδη κανοῦν

εἵλικτο βωμοῦ, φθέγμα δ' ὅσιον εἶχομεν.

μέλλων δὲ δαλὸν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν,

εἰς χέρνιβ' ὡς βάψειεν, Ἀλκμήνης τόκος

930

ἔστη σιωπῇ, καὶ χρονίζοντος πατρὸς

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

SERVANT

Dead are the children !

CHORUS

Woe is me !

SERVANT

Wail ! well may ye wail !

CHORUS

Slain ruthlessly !

Oh that the hands of a father then murder should  
wreak !

SERVANT

Things have we suffered more awful than tongue may  
speak

CHORUS

How ? of the woeful doom by a father wrought

On his sons, canst thou tell ?

Say, say in what fashion the malice of Gods hath  
brought

These ills on the house, and the fate with misery 920  
On the children that fell

SERVANT

Victims were set before the hearth of Zeus

To cleanse the house, since, having slain the king,

Forth of these halls had Hercules flung the corpse

And there his children stood in fair array,

His sire, and Megara Round the altar now [hush

The maund<sup>1</sup> had passed, and we kept hallowed

Then, even in act to bear the torch in hand<sup>2</sup>

And plunge in lustial water, silent stood

Alcmena's son . . and, as then sire delayed,

930

<sup>1</sup> A basket containing the sacrificial knife and barley was carried round the altar before the slaying of the victim

<sup>2</sup> A brand from the altar was quenched in water, with which the bystanders were then sprinkled,

- παῖδες προσέσχον ὄμμ'· ὁ δ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς ἦν,  
 ἀλλ' ἐν στροφαῖσιν ὀμμάτων ἐφθαρμένος  
 ῥίζας τ' ἐν ὄσσοις αἱματῶπας ἐκβαλὼν,  
 ἀφρὸν κατέσταζ' εὐτρίχου γενειάδος  
 ἔλεξε δ' ἅμα γέλῳτι παραπεπληγμένῳ  
 πάτερ, τί θύῳ πρὶν κτανεῖν Εὐρυσθέα  
 καθάρσιον πῦρ, καὶ πόνους διπλοῦς ἔχῳ  
 ἐξὸν μίᾱς μ' ἐκ χειρὸς εὖ θέσθαι τάδε,  
 940 ὅταν δ' ἐνέγκω δεῦρο κρατ' Εὐρυσθέως,  
 ἐπὶ τοῖσι νῦν θανούσιν ἀγνιῷ χέρας.  
 ἐκχεῖτε πηγάς, ῥίπτειτ' ἐκ χειρῶν κανᾶ  
 τίς μοι δίδωσι τόξα, τίς δ' ὄπλον χερός,  
 πρὸς τὰς Μυκήνας εἰμι λάζυσθαι χρεὼν  
 μοχλοὺς δικέλλας θ', ὥς τὰ Κυκλώπων βάθρα  
 φοῖνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἡρμοσμένα  
 στρεπτῷ σιδήρῳ συντριαινῶσω πάλιν  
 ἐκ τοῦδε βαίνων ἄρματ' οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν  
 ἔφασκε, δίφρου δ' εἰσέβαινεν ἄντυγα  
 95(1) κᾶθεινε, κέντρον δῆθεν ὥς ἔχων χερί  
 διπλοῦς δ' ὀπαδοῖς ἦν γέλως φόβος θ' ὁμοῦ  
 καὶ τις τόδ' εἶπεν, ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλον δρακῶν  
 παίζει πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεσπότης ἢ μαίνεται,  
 ὁ δ' εἰρπ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κατὰ στέγας,  
 μέσον δ' ἐς ἀνδρῶν εἰσπεσὼν Νίσου πόλιν  
 ἤκειν ἔφασκε, δωμάτων εἴσω βεβῶς  
 κλιθεὶς δ' ἐς οὐδας ὥς ἔχει σκευάζεται  
 θοίνην διελθὼν δ' ὥς βραχὺν χρόνον μονῆς,  
 Ἴσθμοῦ ναπαίας ἔλεγε προσβαίνειν πλάκας  
 960 κᾶνταῦθα γυμνὸν σῶμα θεὶς πορπαμάτων,  
 πρὸς οὐδέν' ἡμιλλᾷτο κᾶκηρύσσετο

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

His sons looked—lo, he seemed no more the same,  
But wholly manied, with rolling eyes distraught,  
With bloodshot eye-roots starting from his head,  
While dripped the slave down his bearded cheek

Suddenly with a maniac laugh he spake  
“ Why, ere I slay Eurystheus, sacrifice,  
Father—have cleansing fire and toil twice o’er,  
When all in one act I may compass well?  
When hither I have brought Eurystheus’ head,  
For him, with these now slain, I’ll purge my hands  
Spill ye the water, cast the maunds away!  
Ho there—my bow!—the mace of my right hand!  
I march against Mycenae—I must take  
Crowbars and mattocks, that yon Cyclop town,  
Yon walls with red line and with gavel squared,  
May by my bended lever be upheaved”  
Then set forth, speaking of his car the while,  
Who car had none, spring to the chariot-rail,  
And thrust, as who held in his hand a goad

His henchmen, half in mirth and half in fear,  
Were glancing each at other, and one spake:  
“ Doth our lord make us sport, or is he mad?”  
Still was he pacing up and down the house,  
Then, to the men’s hall rushing, cried, “ I have  
come  
To Nisus’ town!”<sup>1</sup>—who stood in his own halls  
He casts him on the bare floor, and prepares  
To feast yet, tarrying there but little space,  
He cried, “ I go to Isthmus’ woodland plains!”  
Then from his body cast his mantle’s folds,  
And wrestled with—*no man*!—proclaimed himself

<sup>1</sup> Megara, half way on his imaginary journey, on the Isthmus of Corinth, this suggested the Isthmian games

- αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ καλλίνικος, οὐδενὸς  
 ἀκοὴν ὑπειπὼν. δεινὰ δ' Εὐρυσθεὶ βρέμων  
 ἦν ἐν Μυκῆναις τῷ λόγῳ πατὴρ δέ νιν  
 θιγὼν κραταιᾶς χειρὸς ἐννέπει τάδε·  
 ὦ παῖ, τί πάσχεις, τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως  
 τῆσδ', οὐ τί που φόνος σ' ἐβάκχευσεν νεκρῶν,  
 οὓς ἄρτι καίνεις, ὁ δέ νιν Εὐρυσθέως δοκῶν  
 πατέρα προταρβοῦνθ' ἱκέσιον ψαύειν χερός,  
 ὠθεῖ, φαρέτραν δ' εὐτρεπῇ σκευάζεται  
 970 καὶ τόξ' ἑαυτοῦ παισί, τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως  
 δοκῶν φονεύειν οἱ δὲ тарβοῦντες φόβῳ  
 ὥρουον ἄλλος ἄλλος, εἰς πέπλους ὁ μὲν  
 μητρὸς ταλαίνης, ὁ δ' ὑπὸ κίονος σκιάν,  
 ἄλλος δὲ βωμὸν ὄρνις ὥς ἔπτηξ' ὑπο  
 βοᾷ δὲ μήτηρ· ὦ τεκῶν, τί δρᾷς; τέκνα  
 κτείνεις, βοᾷ δὲ πρέσβυς οἰκετῶν τ' ὄχλος  
 ὁ δ' ἐξελίσσων παῖδα κίονος κύκλῳ  
 τόρευμα δεινὸν ποδός, ἐναντίον σταθεῖς  
 980 βάλλει πρὸς ἡπαρ· ὑπτίος δὲ λαίνοὺς  
 ὀρθοστάτας ἔδευσεν ἐκπνέων βίον  
 ὁ δ' ἠλάλαξε κάπεκόμπασεν τάδε  
 εἰς μὲν νεοσσὸς ὅδε θανὼν Εὐρυσθέως  
 ἔχθραν πατρώαν ἐκτίνων πέπτωκέ μοι  
 ἄλλῳ δ' ἐπεῖχε τόξ', ὃς ἀμφὶ βωμίαν  
 ἔπτηξε κρηπὶδ' ὥς λεληθῆναι δοκῶν.  
 φθάνει δ' ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς  
 καὶ πρὸς γένειον χεῖρα καὶ δέρην βαλὼν·  
 ὦ φίλτατ', αὐδᾶ, μὴ μ' ἀποκτείνης, πάτερ  
 σὸς εἰμι, σὸς παῖς οὐ τὸν Εὐρυσθέως ὀλεῖς.  
 990 ὁ δ' ἀγριωπὸν ὄμμα Γοργόνοσ στρέφων,  
 ὥς ἐντὸς ἔστη παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος,  
 μυδροκτύπον μίμημ' ὑπὲρ κᾶρα βαλὼν

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To himself the victor, cried, "Ye people, hear!"—  
To none! In fancy at Mycenae then  
He stormed against Eurystheus But his sire  
Clung to his brawny hand, and cried to him,  
"What ails thee? What mad change of mood is this?  
Surely thou art not driven distraught by blood  
Of these late slain!" He deemed Eurystheus' sue,  
A trembling suppliant, hung upon his hand,  
And spurned him back, prepared his quiver and bow  
Against his own sons then, thinking to slay 970  
Eurystheus' sons They, quaking with affright,  
Rushed hither, thither his hapless mother's skirts  
This sought, that to a pillar's shadow fled,  
A third cowered 'neath the altar like a bird

Then shrieked the mother, "Father, what dost thou?  
Wouldst slay thy sons?" The thralls, the ancient,  
cried  
He, winding round the pillar as wound his son  
In fearful circlings, met him face to face  
And shot him to the heart Back as he fell,  
His death-gasps dashed the column with red spray 980  
Then shouted Hercules, and vaunted thus  
"One of Eurystheus' fledglings here is slain,  
Dead at my feet, hath paid for his sire's hate!"  
Against the next then aimed his bow, who crouched  
At the altar's base, in hope to be unseen  
But, ere he shot, the poor child clasped his knees,  
And stretching to his beard and neck a hand,  
"Ah, dearest father," cried he, "slay not me!  
I am thy boy—thine!—'Tis not Eurystheus' son!"  
He rolling savage goigon-glaring eyes, 990  
Since the boy stood too near for that fell bow,  
Swung back overhead his club, like forging-sledge,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξύλον καθήκε παιδὸς εἰς ξανθὸν κάρα,  
 ἔρρηξε δ' ὅστω δέυτερον δὲ παῖδ' ἑλών,  
 χωρεῖ τρίτον θῦμ' ὥς ἐπισφάξων δυοῖν.  
 ἀλλὰ φθάνει νιν ἢ τάλαιν' εἰσω δόμων  
 μήτηρ ὑπεκλαβοῦσα, καὶ κλήει πύλας  
 ὃ δ' ὥς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δὴ Κυκλωπίοισιν ὦν  
 σκάπτει μοχλεῦει θύρετρα, κακβαλὼν σταθμὰ  
 1000 δάμαρτα καὶ παῖδ' ἐνὶ κατέστρωσεν βέλει  
 καὶνθένδε πρὸς γέροντος ἱππεύει φόνον  
 ἀλλ' ἦλθεν εἰκὼν, ὥς ὁρᾶν ἐφαίνετο  
 Παλλὰς κραδαίνουσ' ἔγχος ἐπιλόφῳ κάρᾳ<sup>1</sup>  
 κᾶρριψε πέτρον στέρνον εἰς Ἡρακλέους,  
 ὃς νιν φόνου μαργώντος ἔσχε, κεῖς ὕπνον  
 καθήκε πίτνει δ' εἰς πέδον, πρὸς κίονα  
 νῶτον πατάξας, ὃς πεσήμασι στέγης  
 διχορραγῆς ἔκειτο κρηπίδων ἐπι  
 1010 ἡμεῖς δ' ἐλευθεροῦντες ἐκ δρασμῶν πόδα  
 σὺν τῷ γέροντι δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων  
 ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον', ὥς λήξας ὕπνου  
 μηδὲν προσεργάσαιο τοῖς δεδραμένοις  
 εὔδει δ' ὁ τλήμων ὕπνον οὐκ εὐδαίμονα,  
 παῖδας φονεύσας καὶ δάμαρτ' ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν  
 οὐκ οἶδα θνητῶν ὅστις ἀθλιώτερος

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ φόνος ἦν ὃν Ἀργολὶς ἔχει πέτρα  
 τότε μὲν περισαμότατος καὶ ἄπιστος  
 Ἑλλάδι τῶν Δαναοῦ παίδων  
 1020 τὰ δ' ὑπερέβαλε, παρέδραμε τὰ τότε κακά.  
 . τάλαν διογενεῖ κόρῳ.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wakefield for MSS ἐπὶ λόφῳ κάρᾳ

<sup>2</sup> Tyrwhitt's punctuation no stop in MS



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Down dashed it on his own son's golden head,  
 And shattered all the bones This second slam,  
 He speeds to add to victims twain a third  
 But first the wretched mother snatched the child,  
 And bare within, and barred the chamber-door  
 But he, as though at siege of Cyclop walls,<sup>1</sup>  
 Mines, heaves up doors, and hurls the door-posts down,  
 And with one arrow laid low wife and child 1000  
 Then charges down to spill his own sire's blood  
 But a Shape came,—as seemed unto our eyes,  
 Pallas with plumed helm, brandishing a spear,—  
 And against Hercules' breast she hurled a rock  
 Which stayed him from his murder-frenzy, and cast  
 Into deep sleep To earth he fell, and dashed  
 His back against a pillar, cleft in twain  
 By the roof's ruin, on the pavement thrown  
 Then we, from flight of panic breathing free,  
 Wrought with the old man, binding him with cords 1010  
 Unto the pillar, that, awaked from sleep,  
 He might not add ill deeds to ill deeds done  
 There sleeps he, wretched man, a sleep unblest,  
 Who hath slaughtered sons and wife For me, I know  
 not  
 Of mortals any man more fortune-crost

### CHORUS

That murder which Argos remembereth  
 Was aforetime through Hellas most famous, the  
 strange tale told  
 Of Danaus' daughters, the workers of death —  
 But this hath surpassed, hath outrun, that horror of 1020  
 old— [the sacrifice done  
 This horror that blasts Zeus' Son<sup>1</sup> I might tell of

<sup>1</sup> i. e. Eurystheus' city, Mycenae

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μονοτέκνου Πρόκνης  
 φόνον ἔχω λέξαι θυόμενον Μούσαις·  
 σὺ δὲ τέκνα τρίγωνα τεκόμενος, ὦ δάιε,  
 λυσσάδι συγκατειργάσω μοίρα  
 τίνα στεναγμὸν  
 ἧ γόον ἧ φθιτῶν  
 ὦδάν, ἧ τίν' Ἀίδα χορὸν ἀχήσω ;  
 φεῦ φεῦ·  
 ἴδεσθε, διάνδιχα κληῖθρα  
 κλίνεται ὑψιπύλων δόμων.

1030

ἰὼ μοι·  
 ἴδεσθε τάδε τέκνα πρὸ πατρὸς  
 ἄθλια κείμενα δυστάνου,  
 εὖδοντος ὕπνον δεινὸν ἐκ παίδων φόνου.  
 περὶ δὲ δεσμὰ καὶ πολύβροχ' ἀμμάτων  
 ἐρείσμαθ' Ἡράκλειον  
 ἀμφὶ δέμας τάδε λαίνοις  
 ἀνημμένα κίοσιν οἴκων  
 ὃ δ' ὥς τις ὄρνις ἄπτερον καταστένων  
 ὦδ' ἴνα τέκνων, πρέσβυς ὑστέρω ποδὶ  
 πικρὰν διώκων ἤλυσιν πάρεσθ' ὅδε.

1040

### ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

Καδμεῖοι γέροντες, οὐ σῖγα σί-  
 γα τὸν ὕπνῳ παρειμένον ἐάσετ' ἐκ-  
 λαθέσθαι κακῶν ;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

κατὰ σὲ δακρύοις στένω, πρέσβυ, καὶ  
 τέκεα καὶ τὸ καλλίνικον κᾶρα.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To the Muses,<sup>1</sup> of Procne who slaughtered the only  
child of her womb —

But thou, who art father of children three, O un-  
happiest one, [madness's doom !

Together hast murdered them all, driven on by thy

With what cry shall I wail thee, what sighing,

What chant as for dead that are lying in Hades, what  
dirge of the tomb ?

Alas ! O see

How the bolts slide back, and asunder fall

The stately doors of the palace-hall 1030

*The palace is thrown open, and the scene within disclosed*

Ah me ! ah me !

Lo there the children—ah misery !

At the feet of then wretched father they lie

And from murder of sons he is resting in awful sleep,

And around him the bonds with manifold fastenings  
keep

The body of Hercules in ward,

And lashed to the palace's pillars of stone are the  
coils of the cord

And that old sire, as bird that maketh moan

O'er fledgling brood, with footsteps eld-fordone 1040

Treading a bitter pathway, cometh on

AMPHITRYON

Ah peace, Cadmean fathers, peace !

Let his woes in oblivion a moment cease

By slumber's release

CHORUS

With tears I bemoan thee, and these babes dead,

O ancient, and that victorious head

<sup>1</sup> The legend of Procne's murder of Itys has, in becoming  
a theme of song, been consecrated to the Muses

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἐκαστέρω πρόβατε, μὴ  
κτυπέετε, μὴ βοᾶτε, μὴ  
τὸν εὖ τ' ἰαύονθ'  
ὑπνώδεά τ' εὐνᾶς ἐγείρετε

1050

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι.  
φόνος ὅσος ὅδ'—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ᾄ ᾄ,

διά μ' ὀλεῖτε

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κεχυμένος ἐπαντέλλει

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

οὐκ ἀτρεμαῖα θρήνον αἰάξετ', ὦ γέροντες,  
ἢ δέσμ' ἀνεγειρόμενος χαλάσας ἀπολεῖ πόλιν,  
ἀπὸ δὲ πατέρα, μέλαθρά τε καταρρήξει

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀδύνατ' ἀδύνατά μοι.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

σῖγα, πνοὰς μάθω φέρε πρὸς οὓς βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐδαι,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

1060

ναί, εὐδαι

ὑπνον ὑπνον ὀλόμενον,  
ὃς ἔκαν' ἄλοχον, ἔκανε δὲ τέκεα, τοξήρει  
ψαλμῶ τοξεύσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στέναξέ νυν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

στενάζω.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Withdraw you farther, beat not the breast,  
Neither cry, neither break ye his slumbrous rest  
Of calm-drawn breath

CHORUS

1050

Woe's me for the river of blood he hath spilt'—

AMPHITRYON

Ah, your words be my death

CHORUS

It is rising against him, a witness of guilt !

AMPHITRYON

Let the wail of your dirge, ye ancients, softer fall,  
Else will he wake, will rend his bonds, and in ruin lay  
Thebes, will slay his father, and shatter his palace-hall

CHORUS

I cannot—my crying I cannot forbear

AMPHITRYON

Hush ! let me hearken his breathing—bend low mine  
ear—

CHORUS

Sleepeth he ?

AMPHITRYON

Yea—in a slumber of bane,  
Who hath slain his wife, hath his children slam  
With the string that sang them the bow's death- 1060  
stram !

CHORUS

Wail therefore—

AMPHITRYON

I wail with thee

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τέκνων ὄλεθρον—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὦμοι

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σέθεν τε παιδός.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

σῖγα σῖγα

1070

παλίντροπος ἐξεγειρόμενος στρέφεται· φέρ'  
ἀπόκρυφον δέμας ὑπὸ μέλαθρον κρύψω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· νύξ ἔχει βλέφαρα παιδὶ σῶ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὄρᾱθ' ὄρᾱτε.

τὸ φάος ἐκλιπεῖν ἐπὶ κακοῖσιν οὐ  
φεύγω τάλας, ἀλλ' εἴ με κανεῖ πατέρ' ὄντα,  
πρὸς δὲ κακοῖς κακὰ μήσεται  
πρὸς Ἑρινύσι θ' αἷμα σύγγονον ἔξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τότε θανεῖν σ' ἐχρήν, ὅτε δάμαρτι σᾶ  
φόνον ὁμοσπόρων  
ἔμολες ἐκπράξειν

1080

Ταφίων περίκλυστον ἄστν πέρσας

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

φυγᾶ φυγᾶ, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων  
διώκετε· φεύγετε μάργον  
ἄνδρ' ἐπεγειρόμενον.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

CHORUS

His babes' death,—

AMPHITRYON

Woe is me !

CHORUS

And thy son's doom !

AMPHITRYON

Well-a-day !

CHORUS

Ah ancient—

AMPHITRYON

O hush ye ! stay !

He is writhing—is turning—is waking ! Away !  
Under yon roof let me hide me out of his sight !

CHORUS

Fear not. on the eyes of thy son yet bloodeth the  
night.

AMPHITRYON

Beware—O beware !

Not death do I shun, for a crown of the ills that I bear—  
Wretch that I am !—but if me, if his father, he kill,  
To his load of ill shall he add fresh ill,  
And to heap up his debt to the Furies the blood of a  
kinsman shall spill

CHORUS

Then shouldst thou have died, when thou wentest  
forth to requite [smite  
The blood of the kin of thy wife on the Taphians, to  
Their city enunged with the surf-crests white

AMPHITRYON

Flee, ancients ! Afar from the dwelling flee !  
From his frenzy of fury O hasten ye,  
For he waketh from sleep !

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάχα φόνον ἕτερον ἐπὶ φόνῳ βαλὼν  
 ἀν' αὖ βακχεύσει Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί παῖδ' ἤχθηρας ὦδ' ὑπερκότως  
 τὸν σόν, κακῶν δὲ πέλαγος εἰς τόδ' ἤγαγες,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔα·

1090 ἔμπνους μέν εἰμι καὶ δέδορχ' ἅπερ με δεῖ,  
 αἰθέρα τε καὶ γῆν τόξα θ' Ἥλιου τάδε  
 ὥς δ' ἐν κλύδωνι καὶ φρενῶν ταραγμάτων  
 πέπτωκα δεινῷ καὶ πνοᾷ θερμᾷ πνέω  
 μετάρσι', οὐ βέβαια, πνευμόνων ἅπο  
 ἰδού, τί δεσμοῖς ναῦς ὅπως ὠρμισμένος  
 νεανίαν θώρακα καὶ βραχίονα,  
 πρὸς ἡμιθραύστῳ λαίνῳ τυκίσματι  
 ἡμαι νεκροῖσι γείτονας θάκους ἔχων,  
 πτερωτά τ' ἔγχη τόξα τ' ἔσπαρται πέδῳ,  
 1100 ἃ πρὶν παρασπίζοντ' ἐμοῖς βραχίουσιν  
 ἔσφζε πλευρὰς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' ἐσφύζετο  
 οὐ πον κατήλθον αὐθις εἰς Ἄιδου πάλιν,  
 Εὐρυσθέως δίαυλον ἐξ Ἄιδου μολῶν,  
 ἄλλ' οὐτι Σισύφειον εἰσορῶ πέτρον  
 Πλούτωνά τ', οὐδὲ σκῆπτρα Δήμητρος κόρης.  
 ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαι ποῦ ποτ' ὦν ἀμνημονῶ;  
 ὦή, τίς ἐγγὺς ἦ προσω φίλων ἐμῶν,  
 δύσγνωϊαν ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν ἰάσεται;  
 σαφῶς γὰρ οὐδὲν οἶδα τῶν εἰωθότων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

γέροντες, ἔλθω τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν πέλας,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1110 κἄγωγε σὺν σοί, μὴ προδοὺς τὰς συμφοράς.



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Full soon on the deaths he hath wrought fresh deaths  
shall he heap,  
Through the city of Cadmus storming in awful revelry

CHORUS

Ah Zeus, why this stern hate against thy son ?  
Why hast thou brought him to this sea of ills ?

HERCULES (*waking and stirring*)

Ha !

Breathing I am—all I should see I see,  
The sky, the earth, the shafts of yonder sun 1090  
Yet as in surge and storm of turmoiled soul  
Am whelmed, and fiery-fervent breath I breathe  
Hard-panted from my lungs, not tempered calm  
Ha !—wherefore like a ship by hawsers moored,  
Ropes compassing my strong chest and mine arms,  
Bound to half-shattered masonry of stone  
Sit I ?—lo, corpses neighbours to my seat !  
Winged shafts and bow are strawn about the floor,  
Which once, like armour-bearers to mine arms,  
Warded my side, were kept of me in ward . 1100  
Sure, not to Hades have I again gone down,  
Who have passed, repassed, Eurystheus' Hades-course ?  
Nay, I see not the stone of Sisyphus,  
Pluto, nor sceptre of Demeter's Child  
I am distraught Know I not where I am ?  
Ho there ! who of my friends is near or far  
To be physician to my 'wilderment ?  
For strange to me seem all familiar things

AMPHITRYON

Old friends, shall I draw near unto my grief ?

CHORUS

I too with thee, forsaking not thy woe 1110

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πάτερ, τί κλαίεις καὶ συναμπίσχει κόρας,  
τοῦ φιλτάτου σοι τηλόθεν παιδὸς βεβώς ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον· εἰ γὰρ καὶ κακῶς πράσσω ἐμός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πράσσω δ' ἐγὼ τί λυπρόν, οὐ δακρυρροεῖς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἂ καὶ θεῶν τις, εἰ πάθοι, καταστένοι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέγας γ' ὁ κόμπος, τὴν τύχην δ' οὐπω λέγεις

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὀρᾷς γὰρ αὐτός, εἰ φρονῶν ἤδη κυρεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἴπ' εἴ τι καινὸν ὑπογράφει τῷμῳ βίῳ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

εἰ μηκέθ' "Αἰδου βάκχος εἰ, φράσαιμεν ἄν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1120 παπαῖ, τόδ' ὥς ὑποπτον ἡνίξω πάλιν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καί σ' εἰ βεβαίως εὖ φρονεῖς ἤδη σκοπῶ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ γάρ τι βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

λύσω, γέροντες, δεσμὰ παιδὸς ἣ τί δρῶ ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τόν γε δήσαντ' εἴπ'· ἀναινόμεσθα γάρ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τοσοῦτον ἴσθι τῶν κακῶν· τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄρκει σιωπὴ γὰρ μαθεῖν δ βούλομαι ;

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Father, why dost thou weep and veil thine eyes,  
Shrinking afar from thy beloved son ?

AMPHITRYON

Oh my son !—mine, though ne'er so ill thy plight !

HERCULES

Am I in grievous plight, that thou shouldst weep ?

AMPHITRYON

Plight whereat Gods might groan, were God so  
stricken !

HERCULES

Great words !—but what hath chanced thou say'st  
not yet

AMPHITRYON

Thyself mayst see, if now thy wit be sound

HERCULES

Speak, if thou shadowest forth strange ills for me

AMPHITRYON

I will say—so thy frenzy of hell be past

HERCULES

Again that word !—ha, what dark riddle this ?

1120

AMPHITRYON

Yea, if thy mind be sober yet I doubt—

HERCULES

Naught I remember of a frenzied mind

AMPHITRYON

Fathers, shall I unbind my son, or no ?

HERCULES

Who bound me ? Him I account no friend of mine !

AMPHITRYON

Know thou so far thine ills —the rest let be

HERCULES

Is silence all ? With *that* must I content me ?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ Ζεῦ, παρ' Ἡρας ἄρ' ὀράς θρόνων τάδε ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ τι κεῖθεν πολέμιον πεπόνθαμεν ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τὴν θεὸν ἐάσας τὰ σὰ περιστέλλου κακά

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1130 ἀπωλόμεσθα συμφορὰν λέξεις τίνα ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰδοὺ θέασαι τάδε τέκνων πεσήματα

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἴμοι τίν' ὄψιν τήνδε δέρκομαι τάλας ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἀπόλεμον, ὦ παῦ, πόλεμον ἔσπευσας τέκνοις

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί πόλεμον εἶπας , τοῦσδε τίς διώλεσεν ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σὺ καὶ σὰ τόξα καὶ θεῶν ὃς αἷτιος

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φής , τί δράσας , ὦ κάκ' ἀγγέλλων πάτερ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μανεῖς ἐρωτᾷς δ' ἄθλι' ἐρμηνεύματα

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦ καὶ δάμαρτός εἰμ' ἐγὼ φονεὺς ἐμῆς ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μῖας ἅπαντα χειρὸς ἔργα σῆς τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1140 αἰαῖ στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τούτων ἑκατι σὰς καταστένω τύχας.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON (*unbinding him*)

Zeus, seest thou this bolt from Hera's throne ?

HERCULES

Ha ! have I suffered mischief of her hate ?

AMPHITRYON

Let be the Goddess thine own miseries heed

HERCULES

I am undone ! What ruin wilt thou tell ? 1130

AMPHITRYON

Lo, mark these fallen wrecks,—wrecks of thy sons !

HERCULES

Woe's me ! ah wretch, what sight do I behold ?

AMPHITRYON

Unnatural war, son, waged against thy babes

HERCULES

What wail mean'st thou ? Who hath done these to  
death ?

AMPHITRYON

Thou, and thy bow—and whatso God was cause

HERCULES

How ?—what did I ?—O ill-reporting sire !

AMPHITRYON

In madness Heavy enlightening criavest thou !

HERCULES

Ha ! am I murderer of my wife withal ?

AMPHITRYON

Yea all these deeds are work of one hand—thine

HERCULES

Alas ! a cloud of groaning shrouds me round ! 1140

AMPHITRYON

For this cause heavily mourn I thy mischance

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦ γὰρ συνήραξ' οἶκον, ἦ 'βάκχευσ', ἐμόν ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἓν· πάντα δυστυχή τὰ σά

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποῦ δ' οἷστρος ἡμᾶς ἔλαβε , ποῦ διώλεσεν ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὅτ' ἀμφὶ βωμὸν χεῖρας ἡγνίζου πυρί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἷμοι· τί δῆτα φείδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς

τῶν φιλτάτων μοι γενόμενος παίδων φονεύς,

κοῦκ εἰμι πέτρας λισσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα

ἢ φάσγανον πρὸς ἡπαρ ἐξακουτίσας

1150

τέκνοις δικαστῆς αἵματος γενήσομαι ,

ἢ σάρκα τήνδε τὴν ἐμὴν πρήσας πυρί,

δύσκλειαν ἢ μένει μ' ἀπώσομαι βίου ,

ἀλλ' ἐμποδὼν μοι θανασίμων βουλευμάτων

Θησεύς ὃδ' ἔρπει συγγενὲς φίλος τ' ἐμός.

ὀφθησόμεσθα, καὶ τεκνοκτόνον μύσος

εἰς ὄμμαθ' ἤξει φιλτάτῳ ξένων ἐμῶν

οἷμοι, τί δράσω ; ποῖ κακῶν ἐρημίαν

εὔρω, πτερωτός, ἢ κατὰ χθονὸς μολών ,

1160

φέρ' [ὦ μέλαν] τι<sup>1</sup> κρατὶ περιβύλω σκότος

αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοῖς δεδραμένοις κακοῖς,

καὶ τῷδε προστρόπαιον αἶμα προσβαλὼν

οὐδὲν κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους θέλω.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦκω σὺν ἄλλοις οἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοὰς

μένουσιν, ἔνοπλοι γῆς Ἀθηναίων κόροι,

σῶ παιδί, πρέσβυ, σύμμαχον φέρων δόρυ.

κληδὼν γὰρ ἦλθεν εἰς Ἑρεχθιδῶν πόλιν

<sup>1</sup> Translator's suggestion for MSS φερ' ἔν τι Cf 1 1216

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I wrecked mine house, or loosed wild rioters there ?

AMPHITRYON

One thing I know—thy state is ruin all.

HERCULES

Where did my frenzy seize me ?—where destroy ?

AMPHITRYON

As thine hand touched the altar's cleansing fire

HERCULES

Woe's me ! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,  
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,  
And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,  
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,  
And make me avenger of my children's blood, 1150  
Or with consuming fire burn this my flesh,  
To avert the imminent life-long infamy ?  
But lo, to thwart my purposes of death,  
Theseus draws nigh, my kinsman and my friend  
I shall be seen !—this curse of children's blood  
Shall meet a friend's eyes, dearest of my friends !  
Woe ! What shall I do ?—where find solitude  
In ills ?—take wings, or plunge beneath the ground ?  
Oh let me in black darkness pall mine head,  
For I take shame for evils wrought of me, 1160  
Nor would I taint him with bloodguiltiness—<sup>1</sup>  
Nay, nowise would I harm the innocent

*Enter THESEUS, with attendants*

THESEUS

I come, with them that by Asopus' stream  
In arms are tarrying, Athens' warrior sons,  
Ancient, to bring thy son my battle-aid  
For rumour came to the Erechtheids' town

<sup>1</sup> The mere sight of a murderer conveyed contamination

1170 ὥς σκῆπτρα χώρας τῆσδ' ἀναρπάσας Λύκοι,  
εἰς πόλεμον ὑμῖν καὶ μάχην καθίσταται  
τίνων δ' ἀμοιβὰς ὧν ὑπῆρξεν Ἡρακλῆς  
σώσας με νέρθεν, ἦλθον, εἴ τι δεῖ, γέρον,  
ἢ χειρὸς ὑμᾶς τῆς ἐμῆς ἢ συμμάχων  
ἕα τί νεκρῶν τῶνδε πληθύνει πέδον,  
οὐ πού λέλειμμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν  
ὑστερος ἀφῦγμαι, τίς τὰδ' ἔκτεινεν τέκνα,  
τίνος γεγῶσαν τήνδ' ὀρώ συνάορον,  
οὐ γὰρ δορός γε παῖδες ἴστανται πέλας,  
ἀλλ' ἄλλο τοί που καινὸν εὐρίσκω κακόν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τὸν ἐλαιοφόρον ὄχθον ἔχων ἄναξ—

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί χρήμά μ' οἰκτροῖς ἐκάλεσας προοιμίους,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1180 ἐπάθομεν πάθεα μέλεα πρὸς θεῶν

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἱ παῖδες οἶδε τίνες, ἐφ' οἷς δακρυρροεῖς,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἔτεκε μὲν νιν οὐμὸς ἱνὺς τάλας·  
τεκόμενος δ' ἔκτανε, φόνιον αἷμα τλάς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐφημα φώνει

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

βουλομένοισιν ἐπαγγέλλει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οἰχόμεθ' οἰχομεθα πτανοί

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φῆς; τί δράσας,



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

That Lycus, this land's scepter'd sway usurped,  
For war had risen against you, and for fight  
And to requite the service done of him  
Who out of Hades saved me, come I, ancient,  
If aught ye need mine hand or mine allies  
—Ha ! wherefore bears the earth this load of dead ?  
Have I been laggard ?—have I come too late  
To stay fell mischief ? Who could slay these boys ?  
Whose wife is she, this woman that I see ?  
Not boys, good sooth, are ranged to face the spear !  
Sure, some unheard-of outrage here I find !

AMPHITRYON

King, lord of the mount with the olives crowned—

THESEUS

Why in thy first words wails a voice of woe ?

AMPHITRYON

Sore ill at the hands of the Gods have we found

THESEUS

What lads be these, o'er whom thou weepest so ?

AMPHITRYON

My son was their father—alas and alas for him—  
Their father—and slew them !—who dared that  
murder grim !

THESEUS

Hush ! Speak not horrors thou !

AMPHITRYON

Ah, would that I could but obey thy word !

THESEUS

Dread things thou sayest now !

AMPHITRYON

Fled is our bliss, as on wings of a bird.

THESEUS

What sayest thou ?—how wrought he deed so dread ?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1190 μαινομένῳ πιτύλῳ πλαγχθεὶς  
ἐκατογκεφάλου βαφαῖς ὕδρας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

Ἦρας ὄδ' ἀγών τίς δ' ὄδ' οὖν νεκροῖς, γέρον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ὅδε γόνος ὁ πολύπονος, ὃς ἐπὶ  
δόρυ γιγαντοφόνον ἦλθεν σὺν θεοῖ-  
σι Φλεγραῖον εἰς πεδίον ἀσπιστάς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ φεῦ τίς ἀνδρῶν ὧδε δυσδαίμων ἔφυ,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ ἂν εἰδείης ἕτερον  
πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερόν τε θνατῶν

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ πέπλοισιν ἄθλιον κρύπτει κára,

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1200 αἰδόμενος τὸ σὸν ὄμμα  
καὶ φιλίαν ὁμόφυλον  
αἰμά τε παιδοφόνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἄλλ' ὥς συναλγῶν γ' ἦλθον· ἐκκάλυπτέ νιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον,  
πάρες ἀπ' ὀμμάτων  
πέπλον, ἀπόδικε, ῥέθος ἀελίῳ δεῖξον·  
βάρος ἀντίπαλον δακρύοισιν ἀμιλλᾶται  
ἰκετεύομεν ἀμφὶ σὰν  
γενειάδα καὶ γόνυ καὶ χέρα, προσπίτνων  
πολίον τε δάκρυον ἐκβαλὼν

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Upon madness's surge was his soul tossed wide,  
And his shafts in the blood of the hydra of hundred  
heads were dyed. 1190

THESEUS

Lo, Hera's work ! Who croucheth midst yon dead ?

AMPHITRYON

My son is it—mine—of the thousand toils, who stood  
In the ranks of the Gods, stood slaying the giant-blood  
On the Plain of Phlegra, a warrior good

THESEUS

Woe ! when was man by fate so ill-bested !

AMPHITRYON

None other of mortal men shalt thou see  
Who hath burden of heavier griefs, was more dreadly  
misguided than he

THESEUS

Why doth he overpall his hapless head ?

AMPHITRYON

For shame that thine eyes such sight should win,  
Shame for the pitying love of kin, 1200  
For his sons' blood shame—for the madness, the sin !

THESEUS

Unveil him—me hath sympathy hither led

AMPHITRYON

Son, cast from thine eyes thy mantle's veil ;  
Fling it hence , thy face to the sun forth show  
Lo, a weight that outweigheth thy tears bears down  
grief's scale <sup>1</sup>

I bow me in suppliance low [hear ·  
At thy beard, at thy knee, at thine hand, till thou  
And mine old eyes drop the tear

<sup>1</sup> The claims of friendship outweigh those of grief

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

1210

ὦ παῖ, κατὰ-  
 σχεθε λέοντος ἀγρίον θυμόν, ὥς  
 δρόμον<sup>1</sup> ἐπὶ φόνιον ἀνόσιον ἐξάγει,  
 κακὰ θέλων κακοῖς συνάψαι, τέκνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1220

εἶεν σὲ τὸν θάσσουντα δυστήνους ἔδρας  
 αὐδῶ, φίλοισιν ὄμμα δεικνύναι τὸ σόν.  
 οὐδεὶς σκότος γὰρ ὧδ' ἔχει μέλαν νέφος,  
 ὅστις κακῶν σὼν συμφορὰν κρύψειεν ἄν  
 τί μοι προσείων χεῖρα σημαίνεις φόνον;  
 ὥς μὴ μύσος με σὼν βάλη προσφθεγμάτων,  
 οὐδὲν μέλει μοι σύν γε σοὶ πράσσειν κακῶς  
 καὶ γάρ ποτ' ἠτύχης· ἐκεῖσ' ἀνοιστέον,  
 ὅτ' ἐξέσωσάς μ' εἰς φάος νεκρῶν πάρα.  
 χάριν δὲ γηράσκουσιν ἐχθαίρω φίλων,  
 καὶ τῶν καλῶν μὲν ὅστις ἀπολαύειν θέλει,  
 συμπλεῖν δὲ τοῖς φίλοισι δυστυχοῦσιν οὐ  
 ἀνίστασ', ἐκκάλυψον ἄθλιον κára  
 βλέψον πρὸς ἡμᾶς. ὅστις εὐγενὴς βροτῶν,  
 φέρει τὰ θεῶν γε πτώματ' οὐδ' ἀναίνεται

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, δέδορκας τόνδ' ἀγών' ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1230

ἤκουσα, καὶ βλέποντι σημαίνεις κακά

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτά μου κρᾶτ' ἀνεκάλυψας ἡλίω,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ', οὐ μαίνεις βνητὸς ὦν τὰ τῶν θεῶν

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦγ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀνόσιον μίασμ' ἐμόν.

<sup>1</sup> Reiske for MSS βρόμον

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O son, refrain thou the furious lion's mood ! 1210  
Thou wouldst speed on a race unhallowed, a path of  
blood,  
Who art bent on self-slaughter, on swelling with evil  
evil's flood.

THESEUS

Ho ! thee in spirit-broken session crouched  
I hail—reveal unto thy friends thy face  
There is no darkness hath a pall so black  
That it should hide the misery of thy woes  
Why wave me back with hand that warns of blood ?  
Lest some pollution of thy speech taint me ?  
Naught reck I of misfortune, shared with thee 1220  
Fair lot hath found me—I date it from that hour  
When safe to day thou brought'st me from the dead  
Friends' gratitude that waxeth old I hate,  
Hate him who would enjoy friends' sunshine-tide,  
But will not in misfortune sail with them  
Stand up, unmuffle thou thine hapless head  
Look on me who of men is royal-souled  
Beareth the blows of heaven, and flincheth not

[*Unveils* HERCULES

HERCULES

Theseus, hast seen mine onslaught on mine babes ?

THESEUS

I have heard . the ills thou namest I behold 1230

HERCULES

Why then unveil mine head unto the sun ?

THESEUS

Why ?—mortal, thou canst not pollute the heavens

HERCULES

Flee, hapless, my pollution god-accurst !

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐδεὶς ἀλάστωρ τοῖς φίλοις ἐκ τῶν φίλων

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπήνεσ' εὖ δράσας δέ σ' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὖ τότ' οἰκτείρω σε νῦν

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἰκτρὸς γάρ εἰμι τᾶμ' ἀποκτείνας τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἐφ' ἑτέροισι συμφοραῖς

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἤϋρες δ' ἔτ' ἄλλους ἐν κακοῖσι μείζουσιν,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1240 ἄπτει κάτωθεν οὐρανοῦ δυσπραξία

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τοιγὰρ παρεσκευάσμεθ' ὥστε κατθανεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δοκεῖς ἀπειλῶν σῶν μέλειν τι daίμοσιν,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὐθαδὲς ὁ θεός, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐγώ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἴσχε στόμ', ὥς μὴ μέγα λέγων μείζον πάθης

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γέμω κακῶν δῆ, κοῦκέτ' ἔσθ' ὅπη τεθῇ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δράσεις δὲ δὴ τί, ποῖ φέρει θυμούμενος,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θανών, ὅθενπερ ἦλθον, εἰμι γῆς ὑπο

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἵρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

THESEUS

No haunting curse can pass from friend to friend

HERCULES

Now nay!—yet thanks I helped thee, nor repent

THESEUS

I for that kindness now compassionate thee

HERCULES

Compassion-worthy am I, who slew my sons!

THESEUS

I weep for thy sake, for thy fortune changed

HERCULES

Hast thou known any whelmed in deeper woes?

THESEUS

From earth to heaven reach thy calamities

1240

HERCULES

Therefore have I prepared my soul to die

THESEUS

Deem'st thou that Heaven recks aught of threats of  
thine?

HERCULES

For me God cares not, nor care I for God!

THESEUS

Refrain lips, lest high words bring deeper woes!

HERCULES

Full-flaught am I with woes—no space for more

THESEUS

What wilt thou do?—whither art passion-hurled?

HERCULES

To death. I pass to Hades, whence I came

THESEUS

No hero's words be these that thou hast said

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ὦν γε συμφορᾶς με νουθετεῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1250 ὁ πολλὰ δὴ τλὰς Ἡρακλῆς λέγει τάδε ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔκουν τοσαῦτά γ' ἐν μέτρῳ<sup>1</sup> μοχθητέον

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι καὶ μέγας φίλος ,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἷδ' οὐδὲν ὠφελούσί μ', ἀλλ' Ἡρα κρατεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἄν σ' ἀνάσχοιθ' Ἑλλὰς ἀμαθία θανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν, ὥς ἀμιλληθῶ λόγοις  
πρὸς νουθετήσεις σὰς ἀναπτύξω δέ σοι  
ἀβίωτον ἡμῖν νῦν τε καὶ πάροιθεν ὃν  
πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἐγενόμην ὅστις κτανὼν  
μητρὸς γεραιὸν πατέρα προστρόπαιος ὦν  
1260 ἔγηνε τὴν τεκοῦσαν Ἀλκμήνην ἐμέ.  
ὅταν δὲ κρηπὶς μὴ καταβληθῇ γένους  
ὀρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐκγόνους  
Ζεὺς δ'—ὅστις ὁ Ζεὺς—πολέμιόν μ' ἐγείνατο  
Ἡρα· σὺ μέντοι μηδὲν ἀχθεσθῆς, γέρον  
πατέρα γὰρ ἀντὶ Ζηνὸς ἡγοῦμαί σ' ἐγὼ  
ἔτ' ἐν γάλακτί τ' ὄντι γοργωποὺς ὄφεις  
ἐπεισέφρησε σπαργάνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς  
ἢ τοῦ Διὸς σύλλεκτρος, ὥς ὑλοίμεθα.  
ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι' ἐκτησάμην  
1270 ἡβῶντα, μόχθους οὓς ἔτλην τί δεῖ λέγειν,  
ποίους ποτ' ἢ λέοντας ἢ τρισωμάτους

<sup>1</sup> Hermann : for MSS γ', εἰ μέτρῳ



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Thou dost rebuke me—clear of misery thou !

THESEUS

Speaks Hercules, who hath endured so much,— 1250

HERCULES

Never so much !—its bounds endurance hath

THESEUS

Men's benefactor and their mighty friend ?

HERCULES

*They* cannot help, for Hera's might prevails

THESEUS

Hellas will brook not this fool's death for thee

HERCULES

Hearken, that I may wrestle in argument  
With thine admonishings I will unfold  
Why now, as heretofore, boots not to live  
First, I am his son, who, with blood-guilt stained  
From murder of my mother's aged sire,  
Wedded Alcmena who gave birth to me 1260  
When the foundation of the race is laid  
In sin, needs must the issue be ill-starred

And Zeus—whoe'er Zeus be—begat me foe  
To Hera,—nay but, ancient, be not chafed,  
For truer father thee I count than Zeus  
When I was yet a suckling, Zeus's bride  
Sent gorgon-glaring serpents secretly  
Against my cradle, that I might be slain  
Soon as I gathered vesture of brawny flesh,  
What boots to tell what labours I endured ? 1270  
What lions, what three-bodied Geryon-fiends,

- Ἰηρύνοντας<sup>1</sup> ἢ Γίγαντας ἢ τετρασκελῆ  
 κενταυροπληθῇ πόλεμον οὐκ ἐξήνυσσα,  
 τήν τ' ἀμφίκρανον καὶ παλιμβλαστή κύναι  
 ὕδραν φονεύσας, μυρίων τ' ἄλλων πόνων  
 διήλθον ἀγέλας κεῖς νεκρούς ἀφικόμην,  
 Αἰδου πυλωρὸν κύνα τρίκρανον εἰς φάος  
 ὅπως πορεύσασιν ἐντολαῖς Εὐρυσθέως  
 τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας φόνον,  
 1280 παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς  
 ἦκω δ' ἀνάγκης εἰς τόδ' οὐτ' ἐμαῖς φίλαις  
 Θήβαις ἐνοικεῖν ὅσιον ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,  
 εἰς ποῖον ἱερὸν ἢ πανήγυριν φίλων  
 εἶμι, οὐ γὰρ ἄτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω  
 ἀλλ' Ἄργος ἔλθω, πῶς, ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτρην,  
 φέρ' ἀλλ' ἐς ἄλλην δὴ τιν' ὁρμήσω πόλιν  
 κάπειθ' ὑποβλεπόμεθ' ὥς ἐγνωσμένοι,  
 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι κληδουχούμενοι  
 οὐχ οὗτος ὁ Διός, ὃς τέκν' ἔκτεινεν ποτε  
 1290 δάμαρτά τ', οὐ γῆς τῆςδ' ἀποφθαρῆσεται,  
 κεκλημένω δὲ φωτὶ μακαρίω ποτὲ  
 αἰ μεταβολαὶ λυπηρόν φ' δ' αἰ κακῶς  
 ἔστ', οὐδὲν ἀλγεί συγγενῶς δύστηνος ὢν.  
 εἰς τοῦτο δ' ἤξειν συμφορᾶς οἶμαι ποτε  
 φωνὴν γὰρ ἤσει χθών ἀπενέπουσά με  
 μὴ θιγγάνειν γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν  
 πηγαί τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἄρματήλατον  
 Ἰξίον ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἐκμιμήσομαι.  
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἄριστα μηδέν' Ἑλλήνων μ' ὀρᾶν,  
 1300 ἐν οἷσιν εὐτυχοῦντες ἡμεν ὄλβιοι  
 τί δῆτά με ζῆν δεῖ, τί κέρδος ἔξομεν  
 βίοντον ἀχρεῖον ἀνόσιον κεκτημένοι,

<sup>1</sup> Elmsley for MSS Τυφῶνας.

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O! giants, slew I not?—or with what host  
 Of fourfoot Centaurs fought not out the war?  
 The hound o'erswarmed with heads that severed grew,  
 The Hydra, killed I throngs of toils beside  
 Untold I wrought I passed unto the dead  
 To bring forth at Eurystheus' hest to light  
 The hound three-headed, warder of Hell-gate  
 And this—woe's me!—my latest desperate deed,  
 Murder of sons—mine home's topstone of ills! 1280

I am come to this strait—in my dear-loved Thebes  
 I cannot dwell uncursed Though I should stay,  
 To what fane can I go?—what gathering  
 Of friends?—the Accuist, to whom no man may  
 speak!  
 Shall I to Argos?—I, an outlawed man!  
 Nay then, to another city let me go—  
 And there be eyed askance, a branded man,  
 My jailers there the scorpions of the tongue—  
 “Lo there Zeus' son, who murdered babes and wife!  
 Shall he not hence?—perdition go with him!” 1290  
 Now to the man called happy in time past  
 Reverse is torture he whose days were dark  
 Always, grieves not, being cradled in distress

To this guise shall I come at last, I ween,  
 That earth shall find a voice forbidding me  
 To touch her, and the sea, that I cross not,  
 And river-spings so, like Ixion whuled  
 In chains upon his wheel shall I become  
 Best so—that none set eyes on me in Greece,  
 The land where once I prospered and was blest 1300  
 Why need I live? What profit shall I have  
 Owning a useless life, a life accuist?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

χορευέτω δὴ Ζηνὸς ἡ κλεινὴ δάμαρ  
κρούουσ' Ὀλύμπου δῖον ἀρβύλη πέδον  
ἔπραξε γὰρ βούλησιν ἦν ἐβούλετο,  
ἄνδρ' Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις  
ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα τοιαύτη θεῶ  
τίς ἂν προσεύχοιθ', ἥ γυναικὸς εἵνεκα  
λέκτρων φθονούσα Ζηνὶ τοὺς εὐεργέτας  
Ἑλλάδος ἀπώλεσ' οὐδὲν ὄντας αἰτίους.

1310

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαιμόνων ἀγὼν ὃδε  
ἢ τῆς Διὸς δάμαρτος [οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν]<sup>1</sup>  
παραινέσαιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ πᾶσχειν κακῶς  
οὐδεὶς δὲ θνητῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἀκήρατος,  
οὐ θεῶν, αἰοιδῶν εἴπερ οὐ ψευδεῖς λόγοι  
οὐ λέκτρα τ' ἀλλήλοισιν, ὧν οὐδεὶς νόμος,  
συνῆψαν, οὐ δεσμοῖσι διὰ τυραννίδας  
πατέρας ἐκηλίδωσαν, ἀλλ' οἰκοῦσ' ὄμως  
Ὀλυμπον ἠνέσχοντό θ' ἡμαρτηκότες  
καίτοι τί φήσεις, εἰ σὺ μὲν θνητὸς γεγὼς  
φέρεις ὑπέρφει τὰς τύχας, θεοὶ δὲ μή;  
Θήβας μὲν οὖν ἔκλειπε τοῦ νόμου χάριν,  
ἔπον δ' ἄμ' ἡμῖν πρὸς πόλισμα Παλλάδος  
ἐκεῖ χέρας σὰς ἀγνίσας μιάσματος,  
δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος  
ἃ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἔχω σώσας κόρους  
δὺς ἐπτά, ταῦρον Κνωσίον κατακτανῶν,  
σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς  
τεμένη δέδασται ταῦτ' ἐπωνομασμένα  
σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκληήσεται

1320

1330

<sup>1</sup> Following MSS in assigning 1311-2 to Theseus, and reading (translator's conjecture) οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν for εἴ τὸδ' αἰσθάνει

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now let her dance, that glorious buide of Zeus,  
Beating with sandalled foot Olympus' floor !  
She hath compassed her desire that she desired,  
Down with his pedestal hurling in utter wreck  
The foremost man of Greece ! To such a Goddess  
Who shall pray now ?—who, for a woman's sake  
Jealous of Zeus, from Hellas hath cut off  
Her benefactors, guiltless though they were ! 1310

### THESEUS

This is the assault of none of deities  
Save Zeus's Queen ; yet thee I counsel not  
Rather to die than suffer and be strong  
No mortal hath escaped misfortune's taint,  
Nor God—if minstrel-legends be not false  
Have they not linked them in unlawful bonds  
Of wedlock, and with chains, to win them thrones,  
Outraged their fathers ? In Olympus still  
They dwell, by then transgressions unabashed  
What wilt thou plead, if, mortal as thou art, 1320  
Thou chafe against thy fate, and Gods do not ?

Nay then, leave Thebes, submissive to the law,  
And unto Pallas' fortress come with me  
There will I cleanse thine hands from taint of blood,  
Give thee a home, and of my substance half  
The gifts my people gave for children saved  
Twice seven, when I slew the Cnossian bull,  
These will I give thee All throughout the land  
Have I demesnes assigned me these shall bear  
Thy name henceforth with men while thou shalt live 1330

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ζώντος· θανόντα δ', εὐτ' ἂν εἰς Ἱλίου μόλῃς,  
 θυσίαισι λαίνοισι τ' ἐξογκώμασιν  
 τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ' Ἀθηναίων πόλιν.  
 καλὸς γὰρ ἄστοις στέφανος Ἑλλήνων ὑπο  
 ἄνδρ' ἐσθλὸν ὠφελούντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν.  
 καὶ γὰρ χάριν σοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας  
 τήνδ' ἀντιδώσω· νῦν γὰρ εἰ χρεῖος φίλων  
 θεοὶ δ' ὅταν τιμῶσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ φίλων  
 ἄλλῃ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὠφελῶν, ὅταν θέλῃ.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

- 1340 οἷμοι· πάρεργά τοι τὰδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν  
 ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ' ἂ μὴ θέμις  
 στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμὰ τ' ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν  
 οὔτ' ἡξίωσα πώποτ' οὔτε πείσομαι,  
 οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλον δεσπότην πεφυκέναι  
 δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἴπερ ἔστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,  
 οὐδενός· αἰοιδῶν οἷδε δύστηνοι λόγοι  
 ἐσκεψάμην δὲ καί περ ἐν κακοῖσιν ὦν,  
 μὴ δειλίαν ὄφλω τιν' ἐκλιπῶν φάος.  
 ταῖς συμφοραῖς γὰρ ὅστις οὐχ ὑφίσταται,  
 1350 οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἂν δύναιθ' ὑποστῆναι βέλος  
 ἐγκαρτερήσω θάνατον· εἰμι δ' εἰς πόλιν  
 τὴν σὴν χάριν τε μυρίαν δώρων ἔχω.  
 ἀτὰρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἐγευσάμην  
 ὦν οὔτ' ἀπείπον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων  
 ἔσταξα πηγᾶς, οὐδ' ἂν ὥόμην ποτὲ  
 εἰς τοῦθ' ἰκέσθαι, δάκρυ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων βαλεῖν.  
 νῦν δ', ὥς ἔοικε, τῇ τύχῃ δουλευτέον,  
 εἶεν· γεραίέ, τὰς ἐμὰς φυγὰς ὁρᾷς,  
 ὁρᾷς δὲ παίδων ὄντα μ' αὐθέντην ἐμῶν.  
 1360 δὸς τούσδε τύμβῳ καὶ περιστείλον νεκροὺς  
 δακρύοισι τιμῶν—ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ ἔῃ νόμος—

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And, when in death thou goest to Hades' halls,  
 With sacrifice and monuments of stone  
 Shall all the Athenians' Town exalt thy name.  
 For a fair crown to win from Greeks is this  
 For us, the glory of a hero helped  
 Yea, this requital will I render thee  
 For saving me, for now thou lackest friends  
 When the Gods honour us, we need not friends  
 God's help sufficeth, when he wills it so

### HERCULES

Ah, all this hath no pertinence to mine ills ! 1340  
 I deem not that the Gods for spousals crave  
 Unhallowed tales of Gods' hands manacled  
 Ever I scorned, nor ever will believe,  
 Nor that one God is born another's lord  
 For God hath need, if God indeed he be,  
 Of naught these be the minstrels' sorry tales

• Yet thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—  
*" Shall I quit life, and haply prove me craven ? "*  
 For he who flincheth from misfortune's blows,  
 He even from a mere man's spear would flinch. 1350  
 I will be strong to await death To thy town  
 I go For thy gifts thanks a thousandfold  
 Ah, I have tasted travail measureless,  
 Nor ever shrank from any, never shed  
 Tear from mine eyes, no, nor had ever thought  
 That I should come to this, to weep the tear !  
 But now, meseems, I must be thiall to fate

Ay so !—thou seest, O ancient, mine exile,  
 Thou seest me a murderer of my sons  
 Give these a tomb, and shroud the dead, with tears 1360  
 For honour,—me the law withholds therefrom,—

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- πρὸς στέρν' ἐρείσας μητρὶ δούς τ' ἐς ἀγκάλας,  
 κοινωνίαν δύστηνον, ἣν ἐγὼ τάλας  
 διώλεσ' ἄκων γῇ δ' ἐπὴν κρύψης νεκρούς,  
 οἶκει πόλιν τήνδ', ἀθλίως μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως  
 ψυχὴν βιάζου τὰμὰ συμφέρειν κακὰ  
 ὦ τέκν', ὅ φύσας χῶ τεκῶν ὑμᾶς πατὴρ  
 ἀπώλεσ', οὐδ' ὤνασθε τῶν ἐμῶν καλῶν,  
 ἀγὼ παρεσκεύαζον ἐκμοχθῶν βία  
 1370 εὐκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλήν.  
 σέ τ' οὐχ ὁμοίως, ὦ τάλαιν', ἀπώλεσα  
 ὥσπερ σὺ τὰμὰ λέκτρ' ἔσφρξες ἀσφαλῶς,  
 μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας  
 οἴμοι δάμαρτος καὶ τέκνων, οἴμοι δ' ἐμοῦ·  
 ὡς ἀθλίως πέπραγα κάποζεύγνυμαι  
 τέκνων γυναικός τ' ὦ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων  
 τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὅπλων κοινωνίαι  
 ἀμνηχανῶ γὰρ πότερ' ἔχω τάδ' ἢ μεθῶ,  
 1380 ἀ πλευρὰ τὰμὰ προσπίτνοντ' ἐρεῖ τάδε  
 ἡμῖν τέκν' εἶλες καὶ δάμαρθ'· ἡμᾶς ἔχεις  
 παιδοκτόνους σοὺς εἶτ' ἐγὼ τάδ' ὠλέναις  
 οἴσω, τί φάσκων; ἀλλὰ γυμνωθεὶς ὅπλων,  
 ξὺν οἷς τὰ κάλλιστ' ἐξέπραξ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι,  
 ἐχθροῖς ἐμαντὸν ὑποβαλὼν αἰσχροῶς θάνω;  
 οὐ λειπτέον τάδ', ἀθλίως δὲ σωστέον  
 ἔν μοί τι, Θησεῦ, σὺγκαμ' ἀθλίῳ· κυνὸς  
 κόμιστρ' ἐς Ἄργος συγκατάστησον μολῶν,  
 1390 λύπη τι παίδων μὴ πάθω μονοῦμενος  
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου πᾶς τε Θηβαῖος λεῶς,  
 κείρασθε, συμπευθήσατ', ἔλθετ' εἰς τάφον



## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Laid on the mother's breast, clasped in her arms,  
 Sad fellowship, which I—O wretch!—destroyed  
 Unknowing When thou hast hid them in the  
 tomb,

Live on in Thebes,—in misery, yet still  
 Constrain thy soul to share my load of woe  
 Ah children, your begetter and your sire  
 Slew you!—ye had no profit of my glory,  
 Of all my travail and strenuous toil to win  
 Renown for you—a sire's best legacy 1370

And thee, lost love, not in such wise I slew  
 As thou didst save, didst keep mine honour safe  
 Through all that weary warding of mine house!  
 Woe for my wife and children! woe for me!  
 How mournful is my plight, who am disyoked  
 From babes, from bride! Ah bitter joy of kisses!  
 Ah bitter fellowship of these mine arms!

Keep—cast them from me—I know not which to do  
 Hanging athwart my side thus will they say  
 “*With us thou slewest babes and wife—yet keep'st* 1380  
*Thy children's slayers!*” Shall mine hand bear  
 these?

What can I plead? Yet, naked of mine arms<sup>1</sup>  
 Wherewith I wrought most glorious deeds in Greece,  
 'Neath foes' feet shall I cast me?—foully die?  
 Leave them I may not, to my grief must keep  
 In one thing help me, Theseus come to Argos  
 To back my claim of hire for Cerberus brought,  
 Lest grief for children slay me faring lone  
 O Land of Cadmus, all ye Theban folk,  
 With shorn hair grieve with me to my sons' tomb 1390

<sup>1</sup> He could not replace them by others as good, for they were gifts of Gods—the bow of Apollo, and the club of Hephaestus

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παίδων, ἅπαντας δ' ἐνὶ λόγῳ πενήθησας  
νεκρούς τε καὶ πάντες ἐξολώλαμεν  
"Ἦρας μὲν πληγέντες ἄθλιοι τύχῃ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀνίστασ', ὦ δύστηνε δακρύων δ' ἄλις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· ἄρθρα γὰρ πέπηγέ μου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

καὶ τοὺς σθένοντας γὰρ καθαιροῦσιν τύχαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ·  
αὐτοῦ γενοίμην πέτρος ἀμνήμων κακῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

παῦσαι δίδου δὲ χεῖρ' ὑπηρέτῃ φίλῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄλλ' αἶμα μὴ σοῖς ἐξομόρξωμαι πέπλοις

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1400 ἔκμασσε, φείδου μηδὲν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

παίδων στερηθεῖς παῖδ' ὅπως ἔχω σ' ἐμόν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δίδου δέρη σὴν χεῖρ', ὀδηγήσω δ' ἐγώ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζεῦγός γε φίλιον· ἄτερος δὲ δυστυχής.

ὦ πρέσβυ, τοιόνδ' ἄνδρα χρὴ κτᾶσθαι φίλον

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἦ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατρὶς εὐτεκνος

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, πάλιν με στρέψον, ὥς ἴδω τέκνα

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὥς δὴ τί; φίλτρον τοῦτ' ἔχων ῥάων ἔσει;

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Pass, and in one wail make ye moan for all—  
The dead and me we have wholly perished all,  
Smitten by one sore doom from Heia's hand

THESEUS

Rise, sorrow-stricken. let these tears suffice

HERCULES

I cannot lo, my limbs are palsy-chained

THESEUS

O yea, misfortune breaketh down the strong

HERCULES

Woe worth the day!

Ah to be turned to stone, my woes forgot!

THESEUS

No more! To a friend, a helper, reach thine hand

HERCULES

With this blood let me not besmurch thy robes!

THESEUS

On me wipe all off! Spare not I refuse not! 1400

HERCULES

Of sons bereaved, thee have I, like a son

THESEUS

Cast o'er my neck thine arm, I lead thee on

HERCULES

A yoke of love!—but one, a stricken man  
Father, well may one gain such friend as this

AMPHITRYON

The land that bare him breedeth noble sons!

HERCULES

Theseus, let me turn back, to see my babes

THESEUS

What spell to ease thy pain hath this for thee?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

παθῶ, πατρός τε στέρνα προσθέσθαι θέλω.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰδοὺ τάδ', ὦ παῖ· τὰ μὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1410

οὕτω πόνων σὼν οὐκέτι μνήμην ἔχεις,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἅπαντ' ἐλάσσω κείνα τῶνδ' ἔτλην κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἴ σ' ὄψεται τις θῆλυν ὄντ', οὐκ αἰνέσει

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζῷ σοὶ ταπεινός; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἄγαν γ'· ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς ποῦ κείνος ὢν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ ποῖος ἦσθα νέρβεν ἐν κακοῖσιν ὢν,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὥς εἰς τὸ λῆμα παντὸς ἦν ἥσσω ἀνὴρ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴποις ὅτι συνέσταλμαι κακοῖς;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρόβαινε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ πρέσβυ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ σύ μοι, τέκνον

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θάφθ' ὥσπερ εἶπον παῖδας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐμὲ δὲ τίς, τέκνον;

## THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I yearn—and on my father's breast would fall

AMPHITRYON

Lo here, my son mine heart as thine is fain

THESEUS

Art thou so all-forgetful of thy toils ?<sup>1</sup>

1410

HERCULES

All toils endured of old were light by these

THESEUS

Who sees thee play the woman thus shall scorn

HERCULES

Live I, thy scorn ? Once was I not, I trow !

THESEUS

Alas, yes ! Where is glorious Hercules ?

HERCULES

What manner of man wast thou mid Hades' woes ?

THESEUS

My strength of soul was utter weakness then

HERCULES

Shouldst *thou*, then, name me a man by suffering  
cowed ?

THESEUS

On then !

HERCULES

Farewell, old sire

AMPHITRYON

Farewell thou, son

HERCULES

Bury the lads

AMPHITRYON

Who burieth me, my child ?

<sup>1</sup> The Twelve Labours, of which this weakness is unworthy.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐγώ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

πότ' ἐλθών,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1420

ἤνικ' ἂν θάψῃς τέκνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

πῶς,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς Ἀθήνας πέμψομαι Θηβῶν ἄπο  
ἀλλ' εἰσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῇ  
ἡμεῖς δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον,  
Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἐφορκίδες  
ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων  
ἀγαθῶν πεπᾶσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολὺκλαυτοί,  
τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.

# THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I

AMPHITRYON

When com'st thou ?

HERCULES

When thou hast buried them

1420

AMPHITRYON

How ?

HERCULES

I from Thebes to Athens will bring thee  
Bear in my babes—earth groans to bear such burden !  
I, who have wasted by my shame mine house,  
Like wick in tow will trail in Theseus' wake  
Whoso would fain possess or wealth or strength  
Rather than loyal friends, is sense-bereft

CHORUS

With mourning and weeping sore do we pass away,  
Who have lost the chiefest of all our friends this day.

[*Exeunt OMNES*]





THE  
CHILDREN OF HERCULES



## ARGUMENT

*EURYSTHEUS, king of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by thrusting on him many and desperate labours. And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the pyre whereon he was consumed on Mount Oeta, Eurystheus persecuted the hero's children, and sought to slay them. Wherefore Iolaus, their father's friend and helper, fled with them. But in whatsoever city they sought refuge, thence were they driven, for Eurystheus ever made search for them, and demanded them with threats of war. So fleeing from land to land, they came at last to Marathon which belongeth to Athens, and there took sanctuary at the temple of Zeus. Thither came the folk of the land compassionating them, and Eurystheus' herald requiring their surrender, and the king of Athens, Theseus' son, to hear their cause. And herein is told the tale of the war that came of his refusal to yield them up, of the sacrifice of a noble maiden which the Gods required as the price of victory, of an old warrior by miracle made young, and of the vengeance of Alcmena.*

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΥΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

IOLAUS, *an old man, formerly friend of Hercules*

COPREUS, *herald of Eurystheus*

DEMOPHON, *king of Athens, son of Theseus*

MACARIA, *daughter of Hercules*

HENCHMAN *of Hyllus, Hercules' eldest son*

ALCMENA, *mother of Hercules*

SERVANT *of Alcmena*

MESSENGER, *a captain from the army*

EURYSTHEUS, *king of Argos*

CHORUS *of old men of Marathon*

*Young sons of Hercules, guards, and attendants*

SCENE    At Marathon, in the forecourt of the temple of  
          Zeus    The great altar stands in the midst

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

- Πάλαι ποτ' ἐστὶ τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ δεδογμένον  
ὁ μὲν δίκαιος τοῖς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ,  
ὁ δ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος λήμ' ἔχων ἀνειμένον  
πόλει τ' ἄχρηστος καὶ συναλλάσσειν βαρύς,  
αὐτῷ δ' ἄριστος οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθὼν  
ἐγὼ γὰρ αἰδοῖ καὶ τὸ συγγενὲς σέβων,  
ἐξὸν κατ' Ἄργος ἡσύχως ναίειν, πόνων  
πλείστων μετέσχον εἰς ἀνὴρ Ἡρακλέει,  
ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν νῦν δ', ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐρανὸν  
10 ναίει, τὰ κείνου τέκν' ἔχων ὑπὸ πτεροῖς  
σφῶζω τὰδ' αὐτὸς δεόμενος σωτηρίας  
ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη πατήρ,  
πρῶτον μὲν ἡμᾶς ἤθελ' Εὐρυσθεὺς κτανεῖν  
ἀλλ' ἐξέδραμεν καὶ πόλις μὲν οἴχεται,  
ψυχὴ δ' ἐσώθη φεύγομεν δ' ἀλώμενοι  
ἄλλην ἀπ' ἄλλης ἐξορίζοντες πόλιν  
πρὸς τοῖς γὰρ ἄλλοις καὶ τόδ' Εὐρυσθεὺς κακοῖς  
ὑβρισμ' ἐς ἡμᾶς ἤξιωσεν ὑβρίσαι·  
πέμπων ὅπου γῆς πυνθάνοιθ' ἰδρυμένους  
20 κήρυκας ἐξαιτεῖ τε καὶ ξείργει χθονός,  
πόλιν προτείνων Ἄργος οὐ σμικρὰν φίλην  
ἐχθρὰν τε θέσθαι, χαυτὸν εὐτυχοῦνθ' ἅμα

# THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS *with* HERCULES' CHILDREN, *discovered sitting on  
the altar-steps*

IOLAUS

I HOLD it truth, and long have held —the just  
Lives for his brother men ; but he whose soul  
Uncurbed hunts gain alone, unto the state  
Useless, in dealings hard, is but to himself  
A friend—nor know this by report alone ,  
Since I, who might in Argos peacefully  
Have dwelt, for honour's sake and kinship's bond  
Bore chief share in the toils of Hercules  
When he was with us now, when in the heaven  
He dwells, his babes I shelter 'neath my wings 10  
Defending, who myself sore need defence

For, soon as from the earth their sire had passed,  
Us would Eurystheus at the first have slain,  
But we fled Now our city, our home is lost,  
Life only saved We are exiled wanderers  
From city unto city moving on  
For on our other wrongs this coping-stone  
Of outrage hath Eurystheus dared to set,—  
Heralds to each land where we bide he sends,  
Demandeth us, and biddeth drive us forth, 20  
Warning them that no weakling friend or foe  
Is Aïgos, and himself a mighty king

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οἱ δ' ἀσθενῇ μὲν τὰπ' ἐμοῦ δεδορκότες,  
σμικροὺς δὲ τούσδε καὶ πατρὸς τητωμένους,  
τοὺς κρείσσονας σέβοντες ἐξείργουσι γῆς  
ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν φεύγουσι συμφεύγω τέκνοις  
καὶ σὺν κακῶς πράσσουσιν συμπράσσω κακῶς,  
ὁκνῶν προδοῦναι, μή τις ᾧδ' εἴπη βροτῶν  
ἴδεσθ', ἐπειδὴ παισὶν οὐκ ἔστιν πατήρ,  
30 Ἴόλαος οὐκ ἤμυνε συγγενῆς γεγώς  
πάσης δὲ χώρας Ἑλλάδος τητῶμενοι,  
Μαραθῶνα καὶ σύγκληρον ἐλθόντες χθόνα  
ἰκέται καθεζόμεσθα βώμιοι θεῶν,  
προσωφελῆσαι πεδία γὰρ τῆσδε χθονὸς  
δισσοὺς κατοικεῖν Θησέως παῖδας λόγος  
κλήρῳ λαχόντας, ἐκ γένους Πανδρίωνος,  
τοῖσδ' ἐγγὺς ὄντας ὧν ἑκατὶ τέρμονας  
κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν τήνδ' ἀφικόμεσθ' ὁδόν  
40 δυοῖν γερόντοις δὲ στρατηγεῖται φυγῇ  
ἐγὼ μὲν ἀμφὶ τοῖσδε καλχαίνων τέκνοις,  
ἢ δ' αὖ τὸ θῆλυ παιδὸς Ἀλκμήνη γένος  
ἔσωθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπηγκαλισμένη  
σώζει· νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα  
ὄχλῳ πελάζειν κἀπιβωμιοστατεῖν  
"Ἴλλος δ' ἀδελφοί θ' οἷσι πρεσβεύει γένος  
ζητοῦσ' ὅπου γῆς πύργον οἰκούμεθα,  
ἣν τῆσδ' ἀπωθώμεσθα πρὸς βίαν χθονὸς  
ὧ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ' ἐμῶν  
πέπλων ὀρώ κήρυκα τόνδ' Εὐρυσθέως  
50 στείχοντ' ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, οὐ διωκόμεσθ' ὑπο  
πάσης ἀλῆται γῆς ἀπεστερημένοι  
ὧ μῖσος, εἴθ' ὅλοιο χῶ πέμψας σ' ἀνὴρ·  
ὃς πολλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶνδε γενναίῳ πατρὶ  
ἐκ τοῦδε ταύτου στόματος ἡγγειλας κακά



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And they, discerning that my cause is weak,  
These but young children orphaned of their sue,  
Bow to the strong, and drive us from their land  
I with his banished babes share banishment,  
And with their ill plight am in evil plight  
Forsake them I dare not, lest men should say .  
“ See, now the children’s father is no more,  
Iolaus wards them not,—their kinsman he ! ”  
And so, from all the soil of Hellas banned,  
To Marathon and the federate land we come,  
At the Gods’ altars sitting suppliant,  
That they may help ; for Theseus’ scions twain,  
Saith rumour, in the plains of this land dwell,  
By lot their heritage, Pandion’s seed,  
And kin to these , for which cause have we come  
This journey unto glorious Athens’ bounds,  
Old captains we that lead this exile-march,—  
I, for these lads heart-full of troubled thought ,  
And she, Alcmena, in yon temple folds  
Her arms about the daughters of her son,  
And guards for we think shame to let young girls  
Stand, a crowd’s gazing-stock, on altar-steps  
Now Hyllus and his brethren elder-born  
Seek some land for our refuge and our home,  
If from this soil we be with violence thrust  
O children, children, hither !—seize my robes !  
Yonder I see Eumysteus’ herald come  
Against us, him of whom we are pursued,  
The homeless wanderers barred from every land  
*Enter COPREUS*  
Loathed wretch ! Now ruin seize thee and him that  
sent,  
Who oft-times to the noble sire of these  
From that same mouth hast published evil hests

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἦ που καθήσθαι τήνδ' ἔδραν καλὴν δοκεῖς  
 πόλιν τ' ἀφίχθαι σύμμαχον, κακῶς φρονῶν  
 οὐ γάρ τις ἔστιν ὃς πάροιθ' αἰρήσεται  
 τὴν σὴν ἀχρεῖον δύναμιν ἀντ' Εὐρυσθέως  
 χώρει· τί μοχθεῖς ταῦτ', ἀνίστασθαί σε χρὴ  
 εἰς Ἄργος, οὐ σε λεύσιμος μένει δίκη

60

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι βωμὸς ἀρκέσει θεοῦ  
 ἐλευθέρα τε γαῖ' ἐν ᾗ βεβήκαμεν

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βούλει πόνον μοι τῇδε προσθεῖναι χερί,

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὔτοι βία γέ μ' οὐδὲ τούσδ' ἄξις λαβών.

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

γνώσει σύ· μάντις δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' οὐ καλὸς τάδε

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ ζώντός ποτε

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἄπαιρ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τούσδε, κἂν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς,  
 ἄξω κομίζων, οὐπὲρ εἰς, Εὐρυσθέως

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας δαρὸν οἰκοῦντες χρόνον,  
 ἀμύνεθ'· ἰκέται δ' ὄντες ἀγοραίου Διὸς  
 βιαζόμεσθα καὶ στέφη μαιίνεται,  
 πόλει τ' ὄνειδος καὶ θεῶν ἀτιμία

70

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔα ἔα· τίς ἢ βοή βωμοῦ πέλας  
 ἔστηκε, ποίαν συμφορὰν δείξει τάχα,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Ha, deem'st thou this thy session bravely chosen,  
This state thou hast reached thine ally? O thou fool!  
There is no man shall choose that impotence  
Of thy poor strength before Eurystheus' power  
Away! Why make this coil? Thou must depart  
To Argos, where the doom of stoning waits thee 60

IOLAUS

Never for the God's altar shall avail,  
And the free land whereunto we have come

COPREUS

Ha! wouldst thou find some work for this mine hand?

IOLAUS

No! me no! these by force shalt thou hale hence

COPREUS

That shalt thou prove all seen thou art in this

[*Seizes CHILDREN*

IOLAUS (*resisting*)

This shall not be! no, never while I live!

COPREUS

Hands off! these will I hale, though thou say nay,  
Accounting them Eurystheus' his they are

[*Hurls IOLAUS to the ground*

IOLAUS

O ye, in Athens dwellers from of old,  
Help! Suppliants we of Zeus of the Market-stead 70  
Are evil-entreated, holy wreaths defiled,  
To Athens' shame and to your God's dishonour!  
*Enter CHORUS*

CHORUS

What ho! what outcry by the altar wakes?  
Now what calamity shall this reveal?

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἴδετε τὸν γέροντ' ἀμαλὸν ἐπὶ πέδῳ  
χύμενον· ὦ τάλας

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ποτ' ἐν γῇ πτώμα δύστηνον πίτνεις ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὄδ', ὦ ξένοι, με σοὺς ἀτιμάζων θεοὺς  
ἔλκει βιαίως Ζηνὸς ἐκ προβωμίων

ΧΟΡΟΣ

80 σὺ δ' ἐκ τίνος γῆς, ὦ γέρον, τετράπτολιν  
ξύνοικον ἦλθες λαόν, ἥ πέρα-  
θεν ἀλίῳ πλάτα  
κατέχετ' ἐκλιπόντες Εὐβοῖδ' ἀκτάν ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ νησιώτην, ὦ ξένοι, τρίβω βίον,  
ἀλλ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν σὴν ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄνομα τί σε, γέρον,  
Μυκηναῖος ὠνόμαζεν λεώς ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τὸν Ἡράκλειον ἴστε που παραστάτην  
Ἴόλαον· οὐ γὰρ ὄνομ' ἀκήρυκτον τόδε

ΧΟΡΟΣ

90 οἶδ' εἰσακούσας καὶ πρὶν ἀλλὰ τοῦ  
ποτ' ἐν χειρὶ σᾶ κομίζεις κόρους  
νεοτρεφεῖς, φράσον

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Ἡρακλέους οἶδ' εἰσὶ παῖδες, ὦ ξένοι,  
ικέται σέθεν τε καὶ πόλεως ἀφιγμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρέος ; ἥ λόγων πόλεος, ἔνεπέ μοι,  
μελόμενοι τυχεῖν ,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Behold ye !—the eld-stricken see  
In his feebleness huled to the ground, woe's me !

CHORUS

Of whom thus pitiably wast thou dashed down ?

IOLAUS

This man, O strangers, sets thy Gods at naught,  
And drags me from the altar-floor of Zeus

CHORUS

But from what land, O ancient, hast thou come  
To the folk of the Four Burgs' federal home ?  
Were ye sped overseas by the bime-dipt oar  
To our land from Euboea's craggy shore ?

IOLAUS

Strangers, no island-dweller's life is mine,  
From proud Mycenae come we to thy land

CHORUS

And by what name, ancient of days, did they call  
Thee, they which be fenced with Mycenae's wall ?

IOLAUS

Hercules' helper haply do ye know,  
Iolaus, for not fameless was my name

CHORUS

I know, long since I heard but whose are they,  
The fosterling lads that thine hand leadeth hither-  
ward ?—say

IOLAUS

Strangers, the sons they are of Hercules,  
Which have to thee and Athens suppliant come

CHORUS

Say, what is your need that here ye are ?  
Would ye plead your cause at the nation's bar ?

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν  
τῶν σὼν ἀποσπασθέντες εἰς Ἄργος μολεῖν

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

100

ἀλλ' οὔτι τοῖς σοῖς δεσπόταις τάδ' ἀρκέσει,  
οἱ σοῦ κρατοῦντες ἐνθάδ' εὐρίσκουσί σε

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰκὸς θεῶν ἰκτῆρας αἰδεῖσθαι, ξένε,  
καὶ μὴ βιαίῳ χειρὶ δαιμόνων  
ἀπολιπεῖν ἔδη  
πότνια γὰρ Δίκη τάδ' οὐ πείσεται

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἔκπεμπέ νυν γῆς τούσδε τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως,  
κούδεν βιαίῳ τῇδε χρήσομαι χειρί

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄθεον ἱκεσίαν  
μεθεῖναι πόλει ξένων προστροπὰν

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

110

καλὸν δέ γ' ἔξω πραγμάτων ἔχειν πόδα,  
εὐβουλίας τυχόντα τῆς ἀμείνονος

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκουν τυράννω τῇσδε γῆς φράσαντά σε  
χρῆν ταῦτα τολμᾶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ βία ξένους  
θεῶν ἀφέλκειν, γῆν σέβοντ' ἐλευθέραν,

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

τίς δ' ἐστὶ χώρας τῇσδε καὶ πόλεως ἄναξ,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖς Δημοφῶν ὁ Θησέως

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πρὸς τοῦτον ἀγὼν ἄρα τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου  
μάλιστ' ἂν εἴη· τᾶλλα δ' εἴρηται μάτην.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Given up we would not be, nor torn away  
Hence, in thy Gods' despite, and sent to Argos

COPREUS

Ay, but this shall not satisfy thy masters  
Whose lordship o'er thee holds, who find thee here. 100

CHORUS

God's suppliants, stranger, must we reverence,  
And not with hands of violence tear them hence  
From this place where the Holy Presence is  
The majesty of Justice shall not suffer this

COPREUS

Then from your land send these, Eumystheus' thalls,  
And this mine hand shall do no violence

CHORUS

Now nay, 'twere an impious thing  
To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city  
that cling!

COPREUS

'Tis well to keep thy foot from trouble's snare,  
And in good counsel find the better part 110

CHORUS

Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,  
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore  
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite.

COPREUS

And who is of this land and city king?

CHORUS

Demophon, Theseus' child, a brave sire's son

COPREUS

With him then must all strife of this dispute  
Be held alone all else is idle talk,

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὃδ' αὐτὸς ἔρχεται σπουδὴν ἔχων  
'Ακάμας τ' ἀδελφός, τῶνδ' ἐπήκοοι λόγων.

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

120 ἐπεὶ περ ἔφθης πρέσβυς ὦν νεωτέρους  
βοηδρομήσας τήνδ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραν Διός,  
λέξον, τίς ὄχλον τόνδ' ἀθροίζεται τύχη ,

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ικέται κάθηνται παῖδες οἷδ' Ἡρακλέους  
βωμὸν καταστέψαντες ὡς ὀρεῖς, ἀναξ,  
πατρός τε πιστὸς Ἰόλεως παραστάτης

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τί δῆτ' ἰνυγμῶν ἦδ' ἐδεῖτο συμφορά ,

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

βία νιν οὔτος τῆσδ' ἀπ' ἐσχάρας ἄγειν  
ζητῶν βοὴν ἔστησε κάσφηλεν γόνυ  
γέροντος, ὥστε μ' ἐκβαλεῖν οἴκτῳ δάκρυ

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

130 καὶ μὴν στολὴν γ' Ἑλληνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων  
ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε  
σὸν δὴ τὸ φράζειν ἐστί, μὴ μέλλειν τ', ἐμοί  
ποίας ἀφίξαι δεῦρο γῆς ὄρους λιπῶν ,

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

Ἄργεῖός εἰμι, τοῦτο γὰρ θέλεις μαθεῖν·  
ἐφ' οἷσι δ' ἦκω καὶ παρ' οὗ λέγειν θέλω  
πέμπει Μυκηνῶν δεῦρό μ' Εὐρυσθεὺς ἀναξ  
ἄξοντα τούσδε πολλὰ δ' ἦλθον, ὦ ξένε,  
δίκαι' ὁμαρτῇ δρᾶν τε καὶ λέγειν ἔχων  
Ἄργεῖος ὦν γὰρ αὐτὸς Ἄργεῖους ἄγω  
140 ἐκ τῆς ἐμαντοῦ τούσδε δραπέτας ἐλῶν,  
νόμοισι τοῖς ἐκείθεν ἐψηφισμένους  
θανεῖν· δίκαιοι δ' ἐσμέν οἰκούντες πόλιν



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

### CHORUS

Lo, hitherward himself in haste draws nigh,  
And Acamas his brother, to hear thy claim  
*Enter DEMOPHON, ACAMAS, and attendants*

### DEMOPHON

Since thou, the old, preventedst younger men  
In rescue-rush to Zeus's altar-hearth,  
Tell thou what chance hath gathered all this throng

### CHORUS

Here suppliant sit the sons of Hercules,  
Who have wreathed the altar, as thou seest, O king,  
And Iolaus, leal helper of their sire

### DEMOPHON

What need herein for lamentable cries?

### CHORUS

Yon man essayed to drag them from the hearth  
By force, raised outcry so, and earthward hurled  
The ancient, that for ruth burst forth my tears

### DEMOPHON

Yet is the fashion of his vesture Greek,  
But deeds of a barbarian hand are these  
Man, thine it is to tell me, tarrying not,  
From what land's marches hither thou hast come

### COPREUS

An Argive I, since this thou wouldest know  
Wherefore I come, and from whom, will I tell  
Mycenae's king Eurystheus sends me hither  
To lead these hence Stranger, I bring with me  
Just pleas in plenty, both for act and speech  
Myself an Argive would lead Argives hence,  
Who find them runaways from mine own land,  
By statutes of that land condemned to die,  
For, dwellers in a state subject to none,

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

- αὐτοὶ καθ' αὐτῶν κυρίους κραίνειν δίκας  
πολλῶν δὲ καλῶν ἐστίας ἀφυγμένων,  
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς τοισίδ' ἔσταμεν λόγοις,  
κοῦδεις ἐτόλμησ' ἴδια προσθέσθαι κακά  
ἀλλ' ἢ τιν' εἰς σὲ μωρίαν ἐσκεμμένοι  
δεῦρ' ἦλθον ἢ κίνδυνον ἐξ ἀμηχάνων  
ρίπτοντες, εἴτ' οὖν εἴτε μὴ γενήσεται  
150 οὐ γὰρ φρενήρη γ' ὄντα σ' ἐλπίζουσί που  
μόνον τοσαύτης ἦν ἐπῆλθον Ἑλλάδος  
τὰς τῶνδ' ἀβούλους συμφορὰς κατοικτιεῖν  
φέρ' ἀντίθες γάρ, τούσδε τ' εἰς γαίαν παρεῖς  
ἡμᾶς τ' ἑάσας ἐξάγειν, τί κερδανεῖς,  
τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἔστι σοι λαβεῖν,  
Ἄργους τοσήνδε χεῖρα τήν τ' Εὐρυσθέως  
ἰσχὺν ἅπασαν τῇδε προσθέσθαι πόλει  
ἦν δ' εἰς λόγους τε καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' οἰκτίσματα  
160 βλέψας πεπανθῆς, εἰς πάλην καθίσταται  
δορὸς τὸ πρᾶγμα μὴ γὰρ ὥς μεθήσομεν  
δόξης ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἄτερ χαλυβδικοῦ  
τί δῆτα φήσεις, ποῖα πεδί' ἀφαιρεθεῖς,  
Τιρυνθίοις θεῖς πόλεμον Ἀργείοις ἔχειν,  
ποίοις δ' ἀμύνων συμμάχοις, τίνος δ' ὕπερ  
θάψεις νεκροὺς πεσόντας, ἢ κακὸν λόγον  
κτήσῃ πρὸς ἀστῶν, εἰ γέροντος εἵνεκα,  
τύμβου, τὸ μηδὲν ὄντος, ὥς εἰπεῖν ἔπος,  
παίδων τε τῶνδ', εἰς ἄντλον ἐμβήσῃ πόδα  
ἐρεῖς τὸ λῶστον ἐλπίδ' εὐρήσῃν μόνον.  
. 170 καὶ τοῦτο πολλῶ τοῦ παρόντος ἐνδεές  
κακῶς γὰρ Ἀργείοισιν οἶδ' ὥπλισμένοι  
μάχοιντ' ἂν ἠβήσαντες, εἴ τι τοῦτό σε  
ψυχὴν ἐπαίρει, χοῦν μέσῳ πολὺς χρόνος,  
ἐν ᾧ διεργασθεῖτ' ἄν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

The right is ours to ratify her decrees  
And, though they have come to hearths of many folk,  
Still on the same plea did we take our stand,  
And ruin on his own head none dared bring  
But these came hither, haply spying folly  
In thee, or staking on one desperate throw  
Their venture, or to win or lose it all —  
For sure they deem not thou, if sound of wit,  
Alone in all this Hellas they have travell'd,  
Wilt have compassion on their hopeless plight

Weigh this and that —if thou grant these a home,  
Or if thou let us hale them hence—what gain  
Were thine? From us these boons thou mayest win  
Argos' strong hand and all Eurystheus' might  
Thou mayest range upon this city's side  
If thou regard then pleadings, by their whinnings  
Be softened, to the grapple of the spear  
The matter cometh Never think that we  
Will yield this strife but by the sword's award  
What canst thou plead? Of what lands art thou  
robbed,

That with Tiryntian Aigives thou wouldst war?  
What allies art defending? In whose cause  
Shall those thou buiest fall? Ill fame were thine  
With thine Athenians, if for yon old man,  
That sepulchre,—were naught, as men might say,—  
And these boys, in deep waters thou wilt sink

Thy plea at best is hope for days to come  
Scant satisfaction for the present this!  
For against Argos these, armed, grown to man,  
Should make but feeble stand,—if haply this  
Uplift thine heart —and long years lie between,  
Wherein ye may be ruin'd Nay heed me

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

δούς μηδέν, ἀλλὰ τᾶμ' ἔων ἄγειν ἐμέ  
κτῆσαι Μυκῆνας, μηδ' ὅπερ φιλεῖτε δρᾶν  
πάθης σὺ τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀμείνονας παρὸν  
φίλους ἐλέσθαι, τοὺς κακίονας λάβης.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

180 τίς ἂν δίκην κρίνειεν ἢ γνοίῃ λόγον,  
πρὶν ἂν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μῦθον ἐκμάθῃ σαφῶς ,

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἄναξ, ὑπάρχει μὲν τόδ' ἐν τῇ σῇ χθονί,  
εἰπεῖν ἀκούσαί τ' ἐν μέρει πάρεστί μοι,  
κοῦδεῖς μ' ἀπώσσει πρόσθεν, ὥσπερ ἄλλοθεν  
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷδ' οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐν μέσῳ <sup>1</sup>  
ἐπεὶ γὰρ Ἄργους οὐ μέτεσθ' ἡμῖν ἔτι,  
ψήφῳ δοκῆσαν, ἀλλὰ φεύγομεν πάτραν,  
πῶς ἂν δικαίως ὡς Μυκηναίους ἄγοι  
ᾧδ' ὄντας ἡμᾶς, οὓς ἀπήλασαν χθονός ,  
ξένοι γὰρ ἐσμεν ἢ τὸν Ἑλλήνων ὄρου  
190 φεύγειν δικαιοῦθ' ὅστις ἂν τᾶργος φύγῃ ,  
οὐκουν Ἀθήνας γ' οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων φόβῳ  
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελῶσι γῆς  
οὐ γάρ τι Τραχίς ἐστιν οὐδ' Ἀχαικὸν  
πόλισμ', ὅθεν σὺ τοῦσδε τῇ δίκῃ μὲν οὔ,  
τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὀγκῶν, οἶάπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεις,  
ἤλαυνες ἱκέτας βωμίους καθημένους  
εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται καὶ λόγους κρανοῦσι <sup>2</sup> σούς,  
οὐ φήμ' Ἀθήνας τάσδ' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι  
200 ἄλλ' οἶδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν  
θνήσκειν θελήσους· ἢ γὰρ αἰσχύνῃ πάρος  
τοῦ ζῆν παρ' ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται  
πόλιν μὲν ἀρκεῖ· καὶ γὰρ οὔν ἐπίφθονον

<sup>1</sup> Valckenaer for MSS ἐν μέρει

<sup>2</sup> Elmsley for MSS κρινοῦσι

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Give naught, but suffer me to take mine own ,  
 So gain Mycenæ's friendship Do not err,  
 As oft ye do, taking the weaker side  
 When ye might choose for friend the stronger cause

### CHORUS

Who can give judgment, who grasp arguments,  
 Ere from both sides he clearly learn their pleas ? 180

### IOLAUS

King, this advantage have I in your land,  
 I am free to speak and in my turn to hear ,  
 None, as from other lands, will first expel me  
 We and this man have naught in common now ,  
 We have naught to do with Argos any more  
 Since that decree we are exiled from her soil  
 What right hath he to hale us, whom they banished,  
 As we were burghers of Mycenæ yet ?  
 Aliens we are —or from all Hellas banned  
 Are men whom Argos exiles ?—claim ye this ? 190  
 Sooth, not from Athens she shall drive not forth,  
 For fear of Argives, sons of Hercules  
 She is no Trachis, no Achæan bairn,  
 As that whence thou didst drive these—not of  
     right,  
 But, even as now, by vaunting Argos' power,—  
 These, suppliant at the altar as they sat '  
 If this shall be, if she but ratify  
 Thine hests, free Athens then no more I know  
 Nay, her sons' nature know I, know their mood  
 They will die sooner, for in brave men's eyes 200  
 The honour that fears shame is more than life  
 Suffice for Athens this, for over-praise

λίῳν ἐπαινεῖν ἐστὶ, πολλάκις δὲ δὴ  
 καὐτὸς βαρυνθεὶς οἶδ' ἄγαν αἰνούμενος  
 σοὶ δ' ὥς ἀνάγκη τοῦσδε βούλωμαι φράσαι  
 σῶζειν, ἐπεὶ περ τῆσδε προστατεῖς χθονός  
 Πιτθεὺς μὲν ἐστὶ Πέλοπος, ἐκ δὲ Πιτθέως  
 Αἴθρα, πατὴρ δ' ἐκ τῆσδε γεννᾶται σέθεν  
 Θησεὺς πάλιν δὲ τῶνδ' ἀναιμί σοι γένος  
 210 Ἑρακλῆς ἦν Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς,  
 κείνη δὲ Πέλοπος θυγατρός αὐτανεψίων  
 πατὴρ ἂν εἴη σός τε χὼ τούτων γεγώς  
 γένους μὲν ἦκεις ὧδε τοῖσδε, Δημοφῶν  
 ἂ δ' ἐκτός ἤδη τοῦ προσήκοντός σε δεῖ  
 τίσαι λέγω σοι παισί· φημὶ γάρ ποτε  
 σύμπλους γενέσθαι τῶνδ' ὑπασπίζων πατρὶ  
 ζωστήρα Θησεῖ τὸν πολυκτόνον μέτα,  
 Ἰδίου τ' ἐρεμνῶν ἐξανήγαγεν μυχῶν  
 πατέρα σόν Ἑλλάς πᾶσα τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ

- 220 [ὧν ἀντιδοῦναί σ' οἶδ' ἀπαιτοῦσιν χάριν,  
 μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν  
 τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες ἐκπεσεῖν χθονός  
 σοὶ γὰρ τόδ' αἰσχρόν† χωρίς, ἔν τε πόλει κακόν,†  
 ἱκέτας ἀλήτας συγγενεῖς, οἴμοι κακῶν,  
 βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον, ἔλκεσθαι βία ]  
 ἀλλ' αὐτομαί σε καὶ καταστέφω χεροῖν,  
 μὴ πρὸς γενείου, μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσης  
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας εἰς χέρας λαβῶν  
 γενοῦ δὲ τοῖσδε συγγενῆς, γενοῦ φίλος  
 • 230 πατὴρ ἀδελφὸς δεσπότης· ἅπαντα γὰρ  
 ταῦτ' ἐστὶ κρεῖσσω πλὴν ὑπ' Ἀργείοις πεσεῖν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Is odious · yea, myself have oftentimes,  
Praised above measure, been but galled thereby  
But that thou canst not choose but save these boys  
I would show thee, who rulest o'er this land  
Pittheus was Pelops' son of Pittheus sprang  
Aethia; of her was thy sire Theseus born  
Again, the lineage of these lads I trace  
Zeus' and Alcmena's son was Hercules  
She, child of Pelops' daughter cousins' sons  
Shall be thy father and the sire of these  
So then near kinsman art thou, Demophon,  
But what requital—ties of blood apart—  
Thou owest to these lads, I tell thee —once  
Shield-bearer to then sire, I sailed with him  
To win for Theseus that Belt slaughter-fraught,<sup>1</sup>  
And from black gulfs of Hades he brought up  
Thy sire all Hellas witnesseth to this

This to requite, one boon they crave of thee,—  
Not to be given up, nor torn by force  
From thy Gods' fanes, and banished from thy land  
This were thine own shame, Athens' bane withal,  
That homeless suppliants, kinsmen,—ah, their woes!  
Look on them, look!—be dragged away by force  
I pray thee—these clasped hands are suppliant-  
boughs,—  
By thy beard I implore, set not at naught  
Hercules' sons, who hast them in thine hands  
Prove thee to these true kinsman, prove thee  
friend,  
Their father, brother, master—better that  
Than into hands of Argive men to fall!

<sup>1</sup> The belt of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, the winning of which cost many lives

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥκτειρ' ἀκούσας τούσδε συμφορᾶς, ἄναξ  
τὴν δ' εὐγένειαν τῆς τύχης νικωμένην  
νῦν δὴ μάλιστ' εἰσείδον· οἶδε γὰρ πατρὸς  
ἐσθλοῦ γεγῶτες δυστυχοῦς' ἀναξίως

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τρισσαί μ' ἀναγκάζουσι συμφορᾶς ὁδοί,  
'Ιόλαε, τοὺς σοὺς μὴ παρώσασθαι λόγους  
τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἐφ' οὗ σὺ βώμιος  
θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τήνδ' ἔχων ὁμήγυριν,  
240 τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προὔφειλιν καλῶς  
πράσσειν παρ' ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρῶαν χάριν  
τό τ' αἰσχρόν, οὐπερ δεῖ μάλιστα φροντίσαι  
εἰ γὰρ παρήσω τόνδε συλᾶσθαι βία  
ξένου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς βωμόν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν  
οἰκεῖν δοκήσω γαῖαν, Ἀργείοις δ' ὄκνῳ  
ικέτας προδοῦναι καὶ τὰδ' ἀγχόνης πέλας.  
ἀλλ' ὥφελες μὲν εὐτυχέστερος μολεῖν  
ὅμως δέ καὶ νῦν μὴ τρέσης ὅπως σέ τις  
σὺν παισὶ βωμοῦ τοῦδ' ἀποσπάσει βία  
250 σὺ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν ταῦτά τ' Εὐρυσθεῖ φράσον,  
πρὸς τοῖσδέ τ', εἴ τι τοισίδ' ἐγκαλεῖ ξένοις,  
δίκης κυρήσειν τούσδε δ' οὐκ ἄξεις ποτέ

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐδ' ἦν δίκαιον ᾗ τι καὶ νικῶ λόγῳ ;

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τὸν ἰκέτην ἄγειν βία,

### ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐμοὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀλλ' οὐ σοὶ βλάβος

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐμοί γ', εἴαν σοι τούσδ' ἐφέλκεσθαι μεθῶ.



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

### CHORUS

I pity these in their affliction, king  
High birth by fortune crushed I now behold  
As ne'er before born of a noble sire  
Aie these, yet suffer woes unmerited

### DEMOPHON

Three influences, that meet in one, constrain me,  
Iolaus, not to thrust hence these my guests  
The chiefest, Zeus, upon whose altar thou  
Art sitting with these nestlings compassed round,  
Then, kinship, and the debt of old, that these  
Should for their sire's sake fare well at mine hands,  
Third, dread of shame,—this most I must regard  
For if I let this altar be despoiled  
By alien force, I shall be held to dwell  
In no free land, but cowed by fear of Argos  
To yield up suppliants —hanging were not worse!  
I would that thou hadst come in happier plight,  
Yet, even so, fear not that any man  
Shall from this altar tear thee with these boys  
Thou (*to the HERALD*), go to Argos, tell Eurystheus  
this,  
And, if he implead these strangers in our courts,  
He shall have right These shalt thou hale hence  
never

### COPREUS

Not if my cause be just, my plea prevail?

### DEMOPHON

Just?—to hale hence by force the suppliant?

### COPREUS

Then mine the shame · no harm befalleth thee

### DEMOPHON

My shame too, if I let thee drag these hence

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξόριζε, καὶ τ' ἐκείθεν ἄξομεν

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σκαιὸς πέφυκας τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

δεῦρ', ὥς ἔοικε, τοῖς κακοῖσι φευκτέον

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

280 ἅπασι κοινὸν ῥῦμα δαιμόνων ἔδρα

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ταῦτ' οὐ δοκήσει τοῖς Μυκηναίοις ἴσως

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκουν ἐγὼ τῶν ἐνθάδ' εἰμὶ κύριος ,

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βλάπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδέν, ἦν σὺ σωφρονῆς.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

βλάπτεσθ', ἐμοῦ γε μὴ μιαίνοντος θεοῦς

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐ βούλομαί σε πόλεμον Ἀργείοις ἔχειν

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ γὰρ τοιοῦτος τῶνδε δ' οὐ μεθήσομαι

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἄξω γε μέντοι τοὺς ἐμούς ἐγὼ λαβών

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκ ἂρ' ἐς Ἀργος ῥαδίως ἄπει πάλιν

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πειρώμενος δὴ τοῦτό γ' αὐτίκ' εἴσομαι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

270 κλαίων ἄρ' ἄψει τῶνδε οὐκ ἐς ἀμβολίας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν κήρυκα τολμήσης θενεῖν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Banish them thou then I will lead them thence

DEMOPHON

O born a fool, who wouldst outwit the God !

COPREUS

So hither felons must for refuge flee !

DEMOPHON

The God's house gives to all men sanctuary 260

COPREUS

Haply not so shall think Mycenæ's folk

DEMOPHON

Am I not master then in mine own land ?

COPREUS

Not unto Argos' hurt,—so thou be wise

DEMOPHON

The hurt be yours, so I flout not the Gods

COPREUS

I would not thou with Argos shouldst have wai

DEMOPHON

I too . yet will I not abandon these

COPREUS

Yet will I take mine own and hale them hence

DEMOPHON

Not lightly shalt thou win to Argos back

COPREUS

That will I now try, and be certified

[Attempts to seize them

DEMOPHON (*raising his staff*)

Touch these, and thou shalt rue, and that nigh soon 270

CHORUS

Dare not to strike a herald, for heaven's sake !

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

## ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

εἰ μή γ' ὁ κῆρυξ σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄπελθε· καὶ σὺ τοῦδε μὴ θίγῃς, ἄναξ.

## ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

στείχω μιᾷς γὰρ χειρὸς ἀσθενῆς μάχῃ  
ἤξω δὲ πολλὴν Ἄρεος Ἀργείου λαβὼν  
πάγκαλκον αἰχμὴν δεῦρο. μυρίοι δέ με  
μένουσιν ἀσπιστῆρες Εὐρυσθεύς τ' ἄναξ  
αὐτὸς στρατηγῶν· Ἀλκάθου δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις  
καραδοκῶν τάνθενδε τέρμασιν μένει  
λαμπρὸς δ' ἀκούσας σὴν ὕβριν φανήσεται  
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις γῇ τε τῇδε καὶ φυτοῖς  
μάτην γὰρ ἤβην ὧδέ γ' ἂν κεκτώμεθα  
πολλὴν ἐν Ἀργεῖ, μὴ σε τιμωρούμενοι

## ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

φθείρου τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἄργος οὐ δέδοικ' ἐγώ  
ἐνθένδε δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες αἰσχύνας ἐμὲ  
ἄξειν βία τούσδ'· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων πόλει  
ὑπήκοον τήνδ', ἀλλ' ἐλευθέραν ἔχω

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦρα προνοεῖν, πρὶν ὄροις πελάσαι  
στρατὸν Ἀργείων  
μᾶλα δ' ὄξυς Ἄρης ὁ Μυκηναίων,  
ἐπὶ τοῖσι δὲ δὴ μᾶλλον ἔτ' ἢ πρὶν  
πᾶσι γὰρ οὗτος κήρυξι νόμος,  
δὶς τόσα πυργοῦν τῶν γιγνομένων  
πόσα νιν λέξειν βασιλεῦσι δοκεῖς,  
ὥς δεῖν' ἔπαθεν καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν  
ψυχὴν ἤλθεν διακναῖσαι ,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

DEMOPHON

That will I, if the herald learn not wisdom

CHORUS

[*To HERALD*] Depart thou —touch thou not this man,  
O king

COPREUS

I go, for feeble fight one hand may make.  
But I will hither come with brazen mail  
And spears of Argos' war warriors untold  
Await me, and Eurystheus' self, our king,  
Their chief, expecting what shall come from hence,  
Waits on the marches of Alcathous<sup>1</sup>  
He shall flash forth, being told thine insolence, 280  
On thee, thy folk, this land, and all her fruits  
For all this warrior youth were ours for naught  
In Argos, if we avenge us not on thee

DEMOPHON

Begone! I fear not that thine Argos, I!  
'Twas not for thee to shame me and to drag  
These hence by force This city which I hold  
Is not to Argives subject she is free

[*Exit* COPREUS

CHORUS

It is time to prepare, ere the Argive array  
Over our marches on-sweepeth,  
For Mycenae's war-spirit is keen for the fray, 290  
And more hot for these tidings upleapeth  
Yea, and after his kind will yon herald be swelling  
His wrongs—such aye double a tale in the telling —  
In the ears of his lords, think ye, how will he cry  
On the foulness of outrage "that brought him this day  
Unto death well nigh!"

<sup>1</sup> in Megara, of which Alcathous had shortly before  
been king

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΙΩΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦδε παισὶ κάλλιον γέρας  
 ἢ πατὴρ ἐσθλοῦ καγαθοῦ πεφυκέναι  
 [γαμεῖν τ' ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν· ὃς δὲ νικηθεὶς πόθῳ  
 300 κακοῖς ἐκοινώνησεν, οὐκ ἐπαινέσω,  
 τέκνοις ὄνειδος εἶνεχ' ἡδονῆς λιπεῖν.]<sup>1</sup>  
 τὸ δυστυχὲς γὰρ ἡγέμεναι ἀμύνεται  
 τῆς δυσγενείας μάλλον· ἡμεῖς γὰρ κακῶν  
 εἰς τοῦσχατον πεσόντες ἠϋρομεν φίλους  
 καὶ ξυγγενεὺς τοῦσδ', οἱ τοσῆσδ' οἰκουμένης  
 Ἑλληνίδος γῆς τῶνδε προὔστησαν μόνοι.  
 δότ', ὦ τέκν', αὐτοῖς χεῖρα δεξιάν, δότε  
 ὑμεῖς τε παισὶ, καὶ πέλας προσέλθετε.  
 310 ὦ παῖδες, εἰς μὲν πείραν ἤλθομεν φίλων  
 ἣν δ' οὖν ποθ' ὑμῖν νόστος εἰς πάτραν φανῇ,  
 καὶ δώματ' οἰκήσητε καὶ τιμὰς πατρός,  
 σωτήρας αἰεὶ καὶ φίλους νομίζετε,  
 καὶ μή ποτ' εἰς γῆν ἐχθρὸν αἵρεσθαι δόρυ,  
 μεμνημένοι τῶνδ', ἀλλὰ φιλτάτην πόλιν  
 πασῶν νομίζετ' ἄξιοι δ' ὑμῖν σέβειν  
 οἱ γῆν τοσῆνδε καὶ Πελασγικὸν λεῶν  
 ἡμῶν ἀπηλλάξαντο πολεμίους ἔχειν,  
 πτωχοὺς ἀλήτας εἰσορῶντες· ἀλλ' ὅμως  
 οὐκ ἐξέδωκαν οὐδ' ἀπήλασαν χθονός  
 320 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανών, ὅταν θάνω,  
 πολλῷ σ' ἐπαίνῳ Θησέως, ὦ τῶν, πέλας  
 ὑψηλὸν ἀρῶ καὶ λέγων τάδ' εὐφρανῶ,  
 ὥς εὖ τ' ἐδέξω καὶ τέκνοισιν ἥρκεσας  
 τοῖς Ἡρακλείοις, εὐγενὴς δ' ἂν Ἑλλάδα  
 σφῆζεις πατρώαν δόξαν, ἐξ ἐσθλῶν δὲ φύς  
 οὐδὲν κακίων τυγχάνεις γεγῶς πατρός,

<sup>1</sup> 299-301 are of doubtful genuineness

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

No fairer honour-guerdon may sons win  
Than this, to spring from noble sires and good,  
[And so wed noble wives    Who, passion's thrall,  
Links him with base folk, ne'er shall have my  
praise,

Who, for his lust's sake, stamps his seed with shame ]  
For noble birth stands in the evil day  
Better than base blood    We, to deepest depths  
Of evil fallen, yet have found us friends  
And kin in these · in all the peopled breadth  
Of Hellas these alone have championed us  
· Give, children, unto these the right hand give,  
And to the children ye , draw near to them

Boys, we have put our friends unto the test —  
If home-return shall ever dawn for you,  
And your sires' halls and honours ye inherit,  
Saviours and friends account them evermore,  
And never against them land lift hostile spear,  
Remembering this, but hold them of all states  
Most dear    They are worthy of your reverence,  
Who have ta'en our burden on them, enmity  
Of that great land, that folk Pelasgian  
Beggars they saw us, homeless . for all this  
They gave not up nor chased us from their land  
And I, in life,—in death, when death shall come,  
With high laud will extol thee, good my lord,  
At Theseus' side , and this shall make him glad,  
My tale how thou didst welcome, didst defend  
Hercules' sons, how nobly Hellas through  
Thou guard'st thy sire's renown    thy father's son  
Shames not the noble line wherefrom he sprang.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παύρων μετ' ἄλλων· ἓνα γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖς ἴσως  
εὖροις ἂν ὅστις ἐστὶ μὴ χείρων πατρός

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

330 αἰεὶ ποθ' ἦδε γαῖα τοῖς ἀμηχάνοις  
σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ βούλεται προσωφελεῖν.  
τοιγὰρ πόνους δὴ μυρίους ὑπὲρ φίλων  
ἤνεγκε, καὶ νῦν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ὁρῶ πέλας.

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σοί τ' εὖ λέλεκται, καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' αὐχῶ, γέρον,  
τοιαυτ' ἔσσεσθαι μνημονεύσεται χάρις  
κἀγὼ μὲν ἀστῶν σύλλογον ποιήσομαι,  
τάξω δ', ὅπως ἂν τὸν Μυκηναίων στρατὸν  
πολλῇ δέχωμαι χειρὶ πρῶτα μὲν σκοποὺς  
πέμψω πρὸς αὐτόν, μὴ λάθῃ με προσπεσόν  
340 ταχύς γὰρ Ἄργει πᾶς ἀνὴρ βοηδρόμος·  
μάντεις δ' ἀθροίσας θύσομαι σὺ δ' εἰς δόμους  
σὺν παισὶ χώρει, Ζηνὸς ἐσχάραν λιπών  
εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ σου, κὰν ἐγὼ θυραῖος ὦ,  
μέριμναν ἔξουσ' ἀλλ' ἴθ' εἰς δόμους, γέρον

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν λίποιμι βωμόν, ἐζώμεσθα δὲ  
ικέται μένοντες ἐνθάδ' εὖ πρᾶξαι πόλιν·  
ὅταν δ' ἀγῶνος τοῦδ' ἀπαλλαχθῆς καλῶς,  
ἔμεν πρὸς οἴκους θεοῖσι δ' οὐ κακίοσι  
χρώμεσθα συμμάχοισιν Ἀργείων, ἀναξ-  
τῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἥρα προστατεῖ, Διὸς δάμαρ,  
350 ἡμῶν δ' Ἀθάνα φημὶ δ' εἰς εὐπραξίαν  
καὶ τοῦθ' ὑπάρχειν, θεῶν ἀμεινόνων τυχεῖν  
νικωμένη γὰρ Παλλὰς οὐκ ἀνέξεται

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ σὺ μέγ' αὐχεῖς, ἕτεροι στρ.  
σοῦ πλέον οὐ μέλονται,



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Few such there be amid a thousand, one  
Thou shouldst find undegenerate from his sue

### CHORUS

Ever of old she chooseth, this our land,  
To help the helpless ones in justice' cause 330  
So hath she borne for friends unnumbered toils  
Now see I this new struggle looming nigh

### DEMOPHON

Well said of thee, and sure am I that these  
Shall so prove, unforgot shall be our boon  
Now will I muster for the war my folk,  
And marshal, that a goodly band may greet  
Mycenae's host Scouts first will I send forth  
To meet it, lest unwares it fall on me,  
For swift the Aigives throng to the gathering-cry  
Seers will I bring, and sacrifice Thou, leave 340  
Zeus' hearth, and enter with the boys mine halls  
Therein be they which, though I be afar,  
Shall care for thee Pass, ancient, to mine halls

### IOLAUS

I will not leave the altar Let us sit,  
Abiding Athens' triumph, suppliant here  
And, when thou hast brought this strife to glorious end,  
Then will we enter Champion-gods have we  
Not weaker than the Argive Gods, O king  
Though Hera, bride of Zeus, before them go,  
Ours is Athena, and this tells, say I, 350  
For triumph, to have gotten mightier Gods,  
For Pallas never shall brook overthrow

[*Exit* DEMOPHON.]

### CHORUS

Ay, vaunt as thou wilt, yet uncaring (*Str*)  
Will we swerve none the more from the right,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

360 ὦ ξεῖν' Ἀργόθεν ἐλθών·  
μεγαληγορίαισι δ' ἐμὰς  
φρένας οὐ φοβήσεις  
μήπω ταῖς μεγάλαισιν οὔτῳ  
καὶ καλλιχόροις Ἀθάναις  
εἴη σὺ δ' ἄφρων ὅ τ' Ἀργεῖ  
Σθενέλου τύραννος

370 ὃς πόλιν ἐλθὼν ἑτέραν  
οὐδὲν ἐλάσσον' Ἀργούς,  
θεῶν ἱκτῆρας ἀλάτας  
καὶ ἐμᾶς χθονὸς ἀντομένους  
ξένος ὦν βιαίως  
ἔλκεις, οὐ βασιλεῦσιν εἴξας,  
οὐκ ἄλλο δίκαιον εἰπών  
ποῦ ταῦτα καλῶς ἂν εἴη  
παρά γ' εὖ φρονοῦσιν,

380 εἰρήνην μὲν ἔμοιγ' ἀρέσκει·  
σοὶ δ', ὦ κακόφρων ἀναξ,  
λέγω εἰ πόλιν ἤξεις,  
οὐχ οὔτως ἂ δοκεῖς κυρήσεις.  
οὐ σοὶ μόνῳ ἔγγχος οὐδ'  
ἰτέα κατάχαλκός ἐστιν  
ἄλλ' οὐ, πολέμων ἐραστά,  
μή μοι δορὶ συνταράξης  
τὰν εὖ χαρίτων ἔχουσιν  
πόλιν, ἀλλ' ἀνάσχου

## ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί μοι σύννοιαν ὄμμασιν φέρων  
ἤκεις, νέον τι πολεμίων λέγεις πέρι,  
μέλλουσιν ἢ πάρεισιν ἢ τί πυνθάνει,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

O thou stranger from Argolis faring  
To Athens, thou shalt not affright  
Our souls by thy bluster high-swelling  
Not yet such dishonour be done  
To the land great and fair beyond telling '  
Fools—thou and thy despot-lord dwelling  
In Argos, this Sthenelus' son !

Thou who com'st to a city no lesser (Ant)  
Than Argos, essaying to seize—  
And thou alien, O violent oppressor !—  
The suppliants that cling to her knees,  
The homeless that cry from her altars '  
Thou hast not respect to our king,  
And with justice thy false tongue palters —  
Who, except from truth's pathway he falters,  
But shall count it an infamous thing ?

Peace love I well, but I warn thee, (Epode)  
O tyrant, O treacherous-souled,  
Though thou march to the gates of our hold,  
Not the crown of thy hopes shall adorn thee  
Not for thine hand the war-spear alone  
Nor the brass on the buckler hath shone !  
O thou that in battle delightest,  
Trouble not, trouble not with thy spear  
The burg that the Graces make brightest  
Of cities —dread thou and forbear

*Re-enter* DEMOPHON

IOLAUS

My son, why com'st thou with care-clouded eyes ?  
Tellest thou evil tidings of the foe ?  
Tarry they ?—are they on us ?—what hast heard ?

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

οὐ γάρ τι μὴ ψεύσῃ γε κήρυκος λόγος  
 ὁ γὰρ στρατηγὸς εὐτυχὴς τὰ πρόσθεν ὦν<sup>1</sup>  
 εἴσιν, σάφ' οἶδα, καὶ μάλ' οὐ σμικρὸν φρονῶν  
 εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας ἀλλὰ τῶν φρονημάτων  
 ὁ Ζεὺς κολαστὴς τῶν ἄγαν ὑπερφρόνων.

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

390 ἥκει στράτευμ' Ἀργεῖον Εὐρυσθεὺς τ' ἀναξ  
 ἐγὼ νιν αὐτὸς εἶδον. ἄνδρα γὰρ χρεῶν,  
 ὅστις στρατηγεῖν φησ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς,  
 οὐκ ἀγγέλοισι τοὺς ἐναντίους ὄρᾱν  
 πεδία μὲν οὖν γῆς εἰς τὰδ' οὐκ ἐφήκέ πω  
 στρατόν, λεπαίαν δ' ὀφρύην καθήμενος  
 σκοπεῖ, δόκησιν δὴ τόδ' ἂν λέγοιμί σοι,  
 ποῖα προσάξει στρατόπεδόν τ' ἄνευ δορὸς  
 ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ τε τῇσδ' ἰδρύσεται χθονός  
 καὶ τὰμὰ μέντοι πάντ' ἄραρ' ἤδη καλῶς·  
 400 πόλις τ' ἐν ὀπλοῖς, σφάγιά θ' ἡτοιμασμένα  
 ἔστηκεν οἷς χρή ταῦτα τέμνεσθαι θεῶν,  
 θνηπολεῖται δ' ἄστν μάντεων ὕπο,  
 τροπαῖά τ' ἐχθρῶν· καὶ πόλει σωτήρια  
 χρησμών δ' αἰδονὺς πάντας εἰς ἐν ἀλίσας  
 ἤλεγεα καὶ βέβηλα καὶ κεκρυμμένα  
 λόγια παλαιά, τῇδε γῇ σωτήρια  
 καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων διάφορ' ἐστὶ θεσφάτων  
 πόλλ'. ἐν δὲ πᾶσι γνῶμα ταῦτόν ἐμπρέπει·  
 σφάξαι κελεύουσίν με παρθένον κόρη  
 410 Δῆμητρος, ἣτις ἐστὶ πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω μέν, ὥς ὀρᾶς, προθυμίαν  
 τοσὴνδ' ἐς ὑμᾶς· παῖδα δ' οὔτ' ἐμὴν κτενῶ  
 οὔτ' ἄλλον ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναγκάσω

<sup>1</sup> Tyrwhitt for MSS πρὸς θεῶν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

No empty promise was yon herald's threat  
Their captain, aye triumphant heretofore,  
Shall march, I know, with heart uplifted high,  
Against our Athens Notwithstanding Zeus  
Chastiseth overweening arrogance

### DEMOPHON

They are come, the Argive host and king Euiystheus  
Myself beheld them, for behoves the man,  
Whoso makes claim to know good generalship,  
To see—nor that with eyes of scouts—his foes  
But to the plains not yet hath he marched down  
His bands, but, couched upon the rocky brow,  
Watcheth—I but make guess of that I tell thee—  
Where without conflict to push on his host,  
And in the land's heart camp him safety-gut

Yet all my preparations well are laid  
Athens is all in arms, the victims ready  
Stand for the Gods to whom they must be slain  
By seers the city is filled with sacrifice  
For the foes' rout and saving of the state  
All prophecy-chanteis have I caused to meet,  
Into old public oracles have searched,  
And secret, for salvation of this land  
And, mid their manifold diversities,  
In one thing glares the sense of all the same —  
They bid me to Demeter's Daughter slay  
A maiden of a high-born father sprung

Full am I, as thou seest, of good will  
To you, yet neither will I slay my child,  
Nor force thereto another of my folk,

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἄκονθ'· ἐκὼν δὲ τίς κακῶς οὕτω φρονεῖ,  
 ὅστις τὰ φίλτατ' ἐκ χερῶν δώσει τέκνα,  
 καὶ νῦν πικρὰς ἂν συστάσεις ἂν εἰσίδοις,  
 τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ὡς δίκαιον ἦν ξένοις  
 ἱκέταις ἀρήγειν, τῶν δὲ μωρίαν ἐμοῦ  
 κατηγορούντων εἰ δὲ δὴ δράσω τόδε,  
 οἰκείος ἤδη πόλεμος ἐξαρτύεται  
 420 ταῦτ' οὖν ὄρα σὺ καὶ συνεξεύρισχ' ὅπως  
 αὐτοί τε σωθήσεσθε καὶ πέδον τόδε,  
 καὶ γὰρ πολίταις μὴ διαβληθήσομαι  
 οὐ γὰρ τυραννίδ' ὥστε βαρβάρων ἔχω  
 ἀλλ' ἦν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἢ πρόθυμον οὔσαν οὐκ ἐᾷ θεὸς  
 ξένοις ἀρήγειν τήνδε χρήζουσαν πόλιν,

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τέκν', ἔοιγμεν ναυτίλοισιν, οἵτινες  
 χειμῶνος ἐκφυγόντες ἄγριον μένος  
 εἰς χεῖρα γῆ συνῆψαν, εἴτα χερσόθεν  
 430 πνοαῖσιν ἠλάθησαν εἰς πόντον πάλιν  
 οὕτω δὲ χῆμεῖς τῆσδ' ἀπωθούμεσθα γῆς  
 ἤδη πρὸς ἅκταῖς ὄντες ὡς σεσωσμένοι  
 οἴμοι τί δῆτ' ἔτερψας ὦ τάλαινά με  
 ἐλπίς τότ', οὐ μέλλουσα διατελεῖν χάριν,  
 συγγνωστὰ γάρ τοι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ', εἰ μὴ θέλει  
 κτείνειν πολιτῶν παῖδας, αἰνέσαι δ' ἔχω  
 καὶ τάνθάδ' εἰ θεοῖσι δὴ δοκεῖ τάδε  
 πράσσειν ἔμ', οὔτοι σοί γ' ἀπόλλυται χάρις  
 440 ὦ παῖδες, ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχω τί χρήσομαι  
 ποῖ τρεψόμεσθα, τίς γὰρ ἄστεπτος θεῶν,  
 ποῖον δὲ γαίης ἔρκος οὐκ ἀφίγμεθα,  
 ὀλούμεθ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκδοθησόμεσθα δὴ

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And of his own will who hath heart so hard  
As from his hands to yield a most dear child ?  
Now gatherings mayst thou see of angry mood,  
Where some say, right it is to render help  
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon  
My folly —yea, and if I do this thing,  
Even this day is civil war afoot  
See thou to this then help me find a way 420  
Whereby yourselves and Athens shall be saved,  
And I shall not be of my folk reproached  
For mine is no barbarian despot's sway,  
But by just dealing my just dues I win

### CHORUS

How ? do the Gods forbid that Athens help  
The stranger, though she yearn with eager will ?

### IOLAUS

O children, we are like to shipmen, who,  
Escaped the madding fury of the storm,  
And now in act to grasp the land, have yet  
By blasts been driven from shore to sea again 430  
Even so are we from this land thrust away,  
When, as men saved, even now we touched the  
strand  
Ah, me why didst thou cheer me, cruel hope,  
Erst, when thy mind was not to crown thy boon ?  
The king I cannot blame, who will not slay  
His people's daughters yea, I am content  
With Athens' dealings with us . if my plight  
Please Heaven, my gratitude to thee dies not  
Ah boys, for you I know not what to do !  
Whitherward flee ?—what Gods rest unimplored ? 440  
What refuge upon earth have we not sought ?  
Die shall we, children, yielded up to foes

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

450 κάμου μὲν οὐδὲν εἴ με χρή θανεῖν μέλει,  
 πλὴν εἴ τι τέρψω τοὺς ἐμούς ἐχθροὺς θανῶν  
 ὑμᾶς δὲ κλαίω καὶ κατοικτεῖρω, τέκνα,  
 καὶ τὴν γεραιὰν μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην πατρός  
 ὧ δυστάλαινα τοῦ μακροῦ βίου σέθεν,  
 τλήμων δὲ καγὼ πολλὰ μοχθήσας μάτην  
 460 χρῆν χρῆν ἄρ' ἡμᾶς ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἐχθροῦ χέρας  
 πεσόντας αἰσχυρῶς καὶ κακῶς λιπεῖν βίον  
 ἄλλ' οἴσθ' ὃ μοι σύμπραξον, οὐχ ἅπασα γὰρ  
 πέφευγεν ἐλπίς τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ σωτηρίας  
 ἔμ' ἔκδος Ἀργείοισιν ἀντὶ τῶνδ', ἄναξ,  
 καὶ μήτε κινδύνευε, σωθήτω τέ μοι  
 τέκν' οὐ φιλεῖν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἴτω  
 μάλιστα δ' Εὐρυσθεὺς με βούλοισι' ἂν λαβὼν  
 τὸν Ἡράκλειον σύμμαχον καθυβρίσαι  
 σκαιὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ τοῖς σοφοῖς δ' εὐκτὸν σοφῶ  
 460 ἔχθραν συνάπτειν, μὴ ἀμαθεὶ φρονήματι  
 πολλῆς γὰρ αἰδοῦς καὶ δίκης τις ἂν τύχοι

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, μή νυν τήνδ' ἐπαιτιῶ πόλιν  
 τάχ' ἂν γὰρ ἡμῖν ψευδὲς ἄλλ' ὅμως κακὸν  
 γένοιτ' ὄνειδος ὡς ξένους προὔδωκαμεν

## ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

470 γενναῖα μὲν τάδ' εἶπας, ἄλλ' ἀμήχανα  
 οὐ σοῦ χατίζων δεῦρ' ἄναξ στρατηλατεῖ  
 τί γὰρ γέροντος ἀνδρὸς Εὐρυσθεὶ πλέον  
 θανόντος, ἀλλὰ τούσδε βούλεται κτανεῖν  
 δεινὸν γὰρ ἐχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,  
 νεανῖαι τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμνημένοι  
 λύμης· ἃ κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεῶν  
 ἄλλ' εἴ τιν' ἄλλην οἴσθα καιριωτέραν



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

I reck not of myself, if I must die, —  
Except that o'er my death yon foes shall gloat,  
But for you, babes, I weep in utter ruth,  
And for your sire's grey mother, even Alcmena  
O lady, hapless in thy length of days!  
And hapless I, who have greatly toiled in vain!  
Doomed were we, doomed into a foeman's hands  
To fall, and die in shame and agony!  
King, help me!—wouldst know how?—not every  
    hope  
Of then deliverance hath fled my soul —  
Me to the Argives yield up in their stead  
So be unperilled thou, the lads be saved  
No right have I to love life let it go!  
Me would Eurystheus most rejoice to seize,—  
Hercules' ally, me,—and evil-entreat,  
For churl he is Let wise men pray to strive  
With wise men, not with graceless arrogance  
So, if one fall, he stoops to chivalrous foe

### CHORUS

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame!  
Haply 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this  
That we abandoned stranger-suppliants

### DEMOPHON

Noble thine offer, yet it cannot be  
Not craving thee doth this king hither march,  
For of what profit to Eurystheus were  
An old man's death? Nay, these he lusts to slay  
For dangerous to foes are high-born youths  
Growing to man, and brooding on sires' wrongs,  
And all this he foresees, he needs must so  
If any rede thou knowest more than this

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

βουλὴν, ἐτοίμαζ', ὥς ἔγωγ' ἀμήχανος  
 χρησμών ἀκούσας εἰμὶ καὶ φόβου πλέως

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ξένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς  
 προσθῆτε πρῶτον γὰρ τόδ' ἐξαιτήσομαι  
 γυναικὶ γὰρ σιγὴ τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν  
 κάλλιστον, εἴσω θ' ἥσυχον μένειν δόμων.  
 τῶν σῶν δ' ἀκούσας, Ἰόλεως, στεναγμάτων  
 ἐξῆλθον, οὐ ταχθεῖσα πρεσβεύειν γένους  
 480 ἄλλ' εἰμὶ γάρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δέ μοι  
 μάλιστ' ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε, κάμαυτῆς πέρι  
 θέλω πυθέσθαι, μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς  
 προσκείμενόν τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, μάλιστα σ' οὐ νεωστὶ δὴ τέκνων  
 τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐνδίκως αἰνεῖν ἔχω  
 ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὖ προχωρῆσαι δόμος  
 πάλιν μεθέστηκε· αὐθις εἰς ἀμήχανον  
 χρησμών γὰρ ῥόδους φησι σημαίνειν ὃδε,  
 οὐ ταῦρον οὐδὲ μόσχον, ἀλλὰ παρθένον  
 490 σφάξαι κόρη Δήμητρος ἥτις εὐγενής,  
 εἰ χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ' εἶναι πόλιν  
 ταῦτ' οὖν ἀμηχανοῦμεν· οὔτε γὰρ τέκνα  
 σφάξειν ὃδ' αὐτοῦ φησιν οὔτ' ἄλλου τινός,  
 κάμοι λέγει μὲν οὐ σαφῶς, λέγει δέ πως,  
 εἰ μὴ τι τούτων ἐξαμηχανήσομεν,  
 ἡμᾶς μὲν ἄλλην γαῖαν εὐρίσκειν τινά,  
 αὐτὸς δὲ σῶσαι τήνδε βούλεται χθόνα

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ἐν τῷδε καὶ χόμεσθα σωθῆναι λόγῳ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τῷδε, τᾶλλα γ' εὐτυχῶς πεπραγότες.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

In season, set it forth I am desperate,  
Hearing these oracles, and full of fear

*Enter MACARIA from the temple*

MACARIA

Strangers, impute not for my coming forth  
Boldness to me this is my first request,  
Since for a woman silence and discretion  
Be fairest, and still tarrying in the home  
But, Iolaus, I heard thy moans, and came,—  
Though I be not ordained mine house's head ·  
Yet in some sort it fits me, for I love  
These brethren more than all yea, mine own fate  
Fain would I learn,—lest to the former ills  
Some new pang added now torments thy soul

480

IOLAUS

Daughter, long since have I had righteous cause  
To praise thee chiefest of Hercules' seed  
Our house, that seemed but now to prosper well,  
Once more hath fallen into desperate case  
For oracle-chanters, saith this king, proclaim  
That he must bid to slay nor bull nor calf,  
But a maid, daughter of a high-born sire,  
If we, if Athens, must not cease to be.  
This then is our despair · the king refuseth  
To slay his own or any other's child,  
And saith to me,—albeit not in words,—  
Except we find for this some remedy,  
We must needs forth and seek another land,  
But his own land he cannot chose but save

490

MACARIA

On these terms hangeth our deliverance ?

IOLAUS

On these,—if in all else our fortune speed

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

## ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

- 500 μῆ νυν τρέσης ἔτ' ἐχθρόν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ·  
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὴ πρὶν κελευσθῆναι, γέρον,  
 θνήσκειν ἐτοίμη καὶ παρίστασθαι σφαγῇ  
 τί φήσομεν γάρ, εἰ πόλις μὲν ἀξιοῖ  
 κίνδυνον ἡμῶν εἵνεκ' αἰρεσθαι μέγαν,  
 αὐτοὶ δὲ προστιθέντες ἄλλοισιν πόνους,  
 παρόν σφε σῶσαι, φευξόμεσθα μὴ θανεῖν,  
 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια,  
 στένειν μὲν ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,  
 πατὴρ δ' ἐκείνου φύντας οὐ πεφύκαμεν,  
 510 κακοὺς ὀρᾶσθαι ποῦ τὰδ' ἐν χρηστοῖς πρέπει,  
 κάλλιον, οἶμαι, τῆσδ', ἢ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,  
 πόλεως ἀλούσης, χεῖρας εἰς ἐχθρῶν πεσεῖν,  
 κᾶπειτα δεινά, πατὴρ οὖσαν εὐγενοῦς,  
 παθοῦσαν Ἄϊδην μηδὲν ἦσσον εἰσιδεῖν  
 ἄλλ' ἐκπεσοῦσα τῆσδ' ἀλητεύσω χθονός,  
 κοῦκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι δῆτ', ἔαν δὴ τις λέγῃ  
 τί δεῦρ' ἀφίκεσθ' ἱκεσίοισι σὺν κλάδοις  
 αὐτοὶ φιλοψυχοῦντες, ἔξιτε χθονός  
 κακοὺς γὰρ ἡμεῖς οὐ προσωφελήσομεν  
 520 ἄλλ' οὐδὲ μέντοι, τῶνδε μὲν τεθνηκότων,  
 αὐτὴ δὲ σωθεῖς, ἐλπίδ' εὖ πράξειν ἔχω·  
 πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη τῇδε προὔδοσαν φίλους·  
 τίς γὰρ κόρην ἔρημον ἢ δάμαρτ' ἔχειν  
 ἢ παιδοποιεῖν ἐξ ἐμοῦ βουλήσεται,  
 οὐκουν θανεῖν ἄμεινον ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν  
 ἀναξίαν, ἄλλη δὲ καὶ πρέπει τινὶ  
 μᾶλλον τὰδ', ἣτις μὴ ᾧ πῖσημος ὥς ἐγὼ  
 ἡγείσθ' ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα κατθανεῖν τόδε,  
 καὶ στεμματοῦτε καὶ κατάρχεσθ', εἰ δοκεῖ  
 530 νικᾶτε δ' ἐχθρούς· ἦδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

### MACARIA

Then dread no more the Aigive foeman's spear 500  
Myself—I wait no bidding, ancient—am  
Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.  
What can we say, if Athens count it meet  
To brave a mighty peril for our sake,  
And we to others pass the struggle on,  
And flee death, when that way deliverance lies ?  
Never !—a scoffing to us this should be,  
To sit and moan on, suppliant to their Gods,  
And—born of that sire of whose loins we sprang—  
To show us craven ! Is this like the brave ? 510  
Better, forsooth, this town—which God forbid !—  
Were ta'en, that into hands of foes I fell,  
And suffered—I, from hero-father sprung—  
Horrors, and looked on Hades none the less !  
Or, banished, shall I wander from this land,  
And not be utterly shamed, if one should say,  
“ Wherefore come hither with you suppliant boughs,  
O ye that so love life ?—hence from our land !  
For we to cravens will not render help ? ”

Nay, and not even if all these were slain 520  
And I saved, have I hope of happy days,—  
Many, so tempted, have betrayed their friends,—  
For who would stoop to take a friendless girl  
To wife, or care to raise up seed of me ?  
Better to die than light on such a doom  
Unworthy ! Haply this might well beseem  
Another maid who hath not my renown

Lead on to where this body needs must die  
Wreathe me, begin the rite, if this seem good  
Vanquish your foes ; for ready is this life, 530

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἔκουσα κούκ ἄκουσα· κάξαγγέλλομαι  
 θνήσκειν ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κάμαυτῆς ὕπερ  
 εὖρημα γάρ τοι μὴ φιλοψυχοῦς· ἐγὼ  
 κάλλιστον ἠΐρηκ', εὐκλεῶς λιπεῖν βίον.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξω παρθένου μέγαν λόγον  
 κλύων, ἀδελφῶν ἢ πάρος θέλει θανεῖν,  
 τούτων τίς ἂν λέξειε γενναίους λόγους  
 μᾶλλον, τίς ἂν δράσειεν ἀνθρώπων ἔτι ;

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

540 ὦ τέκνον, οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλλοθεν τὸ σὸν κάρα,  
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἐκείνου σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς  
 πέφυκας Ἡράκλειος· οὐδ' αἰσχύνομαι  
 τοῖς σοῖς λόγοισι, τῇ τύχῃ δ' ἀλγύνομαι  
 ἀλλ' ἢ γένοιτ' ἂν ἐνδικωτέρως φράσω  
 πάσας ἀδελφὰς τῆσδε δεῦρο χρή καλεῖν,  
 καὶ ἢ λαχοῦσα θνησκέτω γένους ὕπερ  
 σέ δ' οὐ δίκαιον κατθανεῖν ἄνευ πάλου.

### ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

οὐκ ἂν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦς· ἐγὼ  
 χάρις γὰρ οὐ πρόσεστι μὴ λέξης, γέρον  
 550 ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐνδέχεσθε καὶ βούλεσθέ μοι  
 χρήσθαι προθύμῳ, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ  
 δίδωμ', ἐκούσα τοῖσδ', ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ' οὐ

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ  
 ὅδ' αὖ λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὶν εὐγενέστερος·  
 κακείνος ἦν ἄριστος, ἀλλ' ὑπερφέρεις  
 τόλμῃ τε τόλμαν καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῷ λόγον  
 οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ' οὐδ' ἀπεννέπω, τέκνον,  
 θνήσκειν σ' ἀδελφοὺς δ' ὠφελεῖς θανούσα σούς.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Willing, ungrudging    Yea, I pledge me now  
For these my brothers' sake, and mine, to die  
For treasure-trove most fair, by loving not  
Life, have I found,—with gloiy to quit life

## CHORUS

What shall I say, who hear this maid's high words  
Consenting for hei brethriën's sake to die?  
What man could utter nobler words than these,  
Or who do nobler deed henceforth for ever?

**IOLAUS**

O child, thine heart is of none other sire—  
Thou art his own seed, of that godlike soul,  
Hercules, sprung! Exceeding proud am I  
For these thy words, but grieve for this hard fate  
Yet how 'twere done more justly will I tell  
Hither be all this maiden's sisters called,  
Then for her house let whom the lot dooms die,  
But that thou die without lot is not just

## MACARIA

I will not perish by the lot's doom, I,  
For then is no free grace thou, name it not  
But if ye will accept me, and consent  
To take an eager victim, willingly  
I give my life for these, nowise constrained

**IOLAUS**

Ah, marvellous one !  
Nobler thy latter speech is than thy first  
Perfect was that, but thou o'erpass'est now  
Courage with courage, word with noble word !  
Yet, daughter, thee I bid not, nor forbid  
To die —thy brethren dost thou, dying, help

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

### ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

560 σοφῶς κελεύεις· μὴ τρέσῃς μιάσματος  
τοῦμοῦ μετασχεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως θάνω  
ἔπου δέ, πρέσβυ σῇ γὰρ ἐνθανεῖν χερὶ  
θέλω πέπλοις δὲ σῶμ' ἐμὸν κρύφον παρών·  
ἐπεὶ σφαγῆς γε πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν εἴμ' ἐγώ,  
εἵπερ πέφυκα πατρὸς οὐπὲρ εὐχομαι

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σὺ παρεστάναι μόρφῳ

### ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τοῦδε χρῆζε, μή μ' ἐν ἀρσένων,  
ἀλλ' ἐν γυναικῶν χερσὶν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον

### ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

570 ἔσται τάδ', ὦ τάλαινα παρθένων· ἐπεὶ  
κάμοι τόδ' αἰσχρόν, μή σε κοσμεῖσθαι καλῶς,  
πολλῶν ἕκατι, τῆς τε σῆς εὐψυχίας  
καὶ τοῦ δικαίου· τλημονεστάτην δὲ σὲ  
πασῶν γυναικῶν εἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ  
ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει τούσδε τὸν γέροντά τε,  
χώρει προσειποῦς' ὑστάτοις προσφθέγμασιν

### ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

580 ὦ χαῖρε, πρέσβυ. χαῖρε καὶ δίδασκέ μοι  
τοιούσδε τούσδε παῖδας εἰς τὸ πᾶν σοφοὺς  
ὥσπερ σύ, μηδὲν μᾶλλον· ἀρκέσουσι γάρ  
πειρῶ δὲ σῶσαι μὴ θανεῖν, πρόθυμος ὢν·  
σοὶ παῖδές ἐσμεν· σαῖν χεροῖν τεθράμμεθα.  
ὁρᾷς δὲ καμὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ὥραν γάμου  
διδούσαν ἀντὶ τῶνδε κατθανουμένην.  
ὑμεῖς δ' ἀδελφῶν ἢ παροῦς' ὁμιλία,  
εὐδαιμονοῖτε, καὶ γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων  
ἡμῇ πάροιθε καρδία σφαγήσεται.  
καὶ τὸν γέροντα τὴν τ' ἔσω γραῖαν δόμων



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Thou dost bid—wisely Fear not thou to take  
Guilt-stain of me , but let me die—die free  
Come with me, ancient in thine aims to die 560  
I ask Be near me , veil my corse with robes,  
Since to the hoior of the knife I pass—  
If I be of the sue that I boast mine

IOLAUS

I cannot stand and look upon thy doom.

MACARIA

At least ask thou the king that I may breathe  
My last breath not in men's but women's hands

DEMOPHON

This shall be, hapless among maidens . shame  
Were mine to grace thee not with honour meet,  
For causes manifold, for thy great heart,  
For justice' sake, and for that thou art brave 570  
Above all women that mine eyes have seen  
Wouldst thou say aught to these, or this grey sue,  
Speak thy last word, or ever thou depart [*Exit*

MACARIA

Farewell, old sire, farewell, and teach, O teach  
These boys to be like thee, in all things wise  
As thou art—no whit more that shall suffice  
And strive from death to save them, loyal soul  
Thy children are we, fostered by thine hands  
Thou seest how my bloom of spousal-tide  
I yield up in the stead of these to die 580  
And ye, O band of biethren at my side,  
Blessings on you ! May all be yours, for which  
The cleaving of mine heart shall pay the price  
This old man, and the grey queen therewithin,

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

τιμᾶτε πατρὸς μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην ἐμοῦ  
 ξένους τε τούσδε. καὶ ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων  
 καὶ νόστος ὑμῖν εὐρεθῇ ποτ' ἐκ θεῶν,  
 μέμνησθε τὴν σώτειραν ὡς θάψαι χρεῶν  
 κάλλιστά τοι δίκαιον· οὐ γὰρ ἐνδεής  
 590 ὑμῖν παρέστην, ἀλλὰ προὔθανον γένους.  
 τάδ' ἀντὶ παίδων ἐστὶ μοι κειμήλια  
 καὶ παρθενείας, εἴ τι δὴ κάτω χθονός·  
 εἴη γε μέντοι μηδέν· εἰ γὰρ ἔξομεν  
 καῖκεί μερίμνας οἱ θανούμενοι βροτῶν,  
 οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι τις τρέψεται· τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν  
 κακῶν μέγιστον φάρμακον νομίζεται

### ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὦ μέγιστον ἐκπρέπουσ' εὐψυχία  
 πασῶν γυναικῶν, ἴσθι, τιμιωτάτη  
 καὶ ζῶσ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν καὶ θανούσ' ἔσει πολὺ·  
 600 καὶ χαῖρε δυσφημεῖν γὰρ ἄζομαι θεάν,  
 ἣ σὸν κατήρκται σῶμα, Δήμητρος κόρην  
 ὦ παῖδες, οἰχόμεσθα λύεται μέλη  
 λύπη· λάβεσθε κεῖς ἔδραν μ' ἐρείσατε  
 αὐτοῦ πέπλοισι τοῖσδε κρύψαντες, τέκνα  
 ὥς οὔτε τούτοις ἦδομαι πεπραγμένοις,  
 χρησμοῦ τε μὴ κρανθέντος οὐ βιώσιμον·  
 μείζων γὰρ ἄτη, συμφορὰ δὲ καὶ τάδε

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ

οὔτινά φημι θεῶν ἄτερ ὄλβιον, οὐ βαρύποτμον,  
 ἄνδρα γενέσθαι,  
 610 οὐδὲ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βεβάναι δόμον  
 εὐτυχία παρὰ δ' ἄλλαν ἄλλα  
 μοῖρα διώκει

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Alcmena, my sire's mother, honour ye,  
 And these our hosts    If there be found of heaven  
 For you release from toils, and home-return,  
 Remember then your saviour's burial due,—  
 Fair burial, as is just    I have' failed you naught,  
 Have stood your champion, for mine house have died    590  
 My treasure this shall be, for babes unborn,  
 Spousals forlorn,—if in the grave aught be  
 But ah that naught might be '—for if there too  
 We mortals who must die shall yet have cares,  
 I know not whither one shall turn, since death  
 For sorrows is accounted chiefest balm

IOLAUS

O thou who for high courage hast no peer,  
 Above all women, know, in life, in death,  
 Most chiefest honour shalt thou have of us  
 Farewell, for awe I dare not curse the Goddess,    600  
 Demeter's child, to whom thy life is sealed

[*Exit* MACARIA    IOLAUS *sinks to the ground*]

O boys, we are undone '—faint fail my limbs  
 For anguish '    Take, upbear me to a seat  
 Hereby, and muffle with these robes, my sons  
 For neither can I joy in these deeds done,  
 Nor might we live, the oracle unfulfilled  
 This is calamity, that were deeper ruin.

CHORUS

(*Str*)

Never man hath been blessed save by God's dispensation,  
 nor bowed under sorrow—

Lo, this do I cry —    [*ways*,

Not the same house treads evermore in prosperity's    610  
 But the fate of to-day is dogged by the feet of the  
 fate of to-morrow

Ever treading agh,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχὺν ᾤκισε,  
τὸν δ' ἀτίταν<sup>1</sup> εὐδαίμονα τεύχει.  
μόρσιμα δ' οὔτι φυγεῖν θέμις,  
οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώσεται·  
ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρόθυμος αἰὲ πόνον ἔξει

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτνων τὰ θεῶν φέρε μῆδ' ὑπερ-  
άλγει

- 620 φροντίδα λύπα  
εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος  
ἂ μελέα πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς  
οὐδ' ἀκλεῆς νιν  
δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ὑποδέξεται  
ἂ δ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει διὰ μόχθων  
ἄξια μὲν πατρός, ἄξια δ'  
εὐγενίας τάδε γίγνεται·  
εἰ δὲ σέβεις θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μετέχω σοι

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 630 ὦ τέκνα, χαίρετ' Ἰόλεως δὲ ποῦ γέρων  
μήτηρ τε πατρὸς τῆσδ' ἔδρας ἀποστατεῖ,

## ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πάρεσμεν, οἷα δὴ γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσία

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί χρήμα κεῖσαι καὶ κατηχὲς ὅμμ' ἔχεις,

## ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φροντίς τις ἦλθ' οἰκείος, ἥ συνειχόμην

<sup>1</sup> Lobeck for MSS ἀλήταν



## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἔπαιρέ νυν σεαυτόν, ὄρθωσον κέρα

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

γέροντές ἐσμεν κοῦδαμῶς ἐρρώμεθα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦκω γε μέντοι χάρμα σοι φέρων μέγα

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' εἰ σύ, ποῦ σοι συντυχῶν ἀμνημονῶ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Ἵλλου πενέστης οὐ με γιγνώσκεις ὄρων,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

640 ὦ φίλταθ', ἦκεις ἄρα νῶν σωτὴρ βλάβης;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα καὶ πρὸς γ' εὐτυχεῖς τὰ νῦν τάδε

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ μήτερ ἐσθλοῦ παιδός, Ἀλκμήνην λέγω,  
ἔξελθ', ἄκουσον τούσδε φιλτάτους λόγους  
πάλαι γὰρ ὠδίνουσα τῶν ἀφειγμένων  
ψυχὴν ἐτήκου νόστος εἰ γενήσεται

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί χρήμ' αὐτῆς πᾶν τόδ' ἐπλήσθη στέγος,  
Ἰόλαε, μὲν τίς σ' αὖ βιάζεται παρῶν  
κῆρυξ ἀπ' Ἀργούς, ἀσθενὴς μὲν ἦ γ' ἐμὴ  
ῥώμη, τοσόνδε δ' εἰδέναι σε χρή, ξένε,  
650 οὐκ ἔστ' ἄγειν σε τούσδ' ἐμοῦ ζώσης ποτὲ  
ἦ τάρ' ἐκείνου μὴ νομιζοίμην ἐγὼ  
μήτηρ ἔτ' εἰ δὲ τῶνδε προσθίξει χερί,  
δυοῖν γερόντοι οὐ καλῶς ἀγωνιεῖ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

θάρσει, γεραιά, μὴ τρέσης· οὐκ Ἀργόθεν  
κῆρυξ ἀφίκται πολεμίους λόγους ἔχων

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yet now upraise thyself uplift thine head

IOLAUS

Old am I, and my strength is utter naught

HENCHMAN

But bringing tidings of great joy I come

IOLAUS

Who art thou?—where have I met thee unmem-  
bered?

HENCHMAN

I am Hyllus' vassal Look, dost know me not?

IOLAUS

Friend, com'st thou our deliverer from bane? 640

HENCHMAN

Yea therewithal thou art fortunate this day

IOLAUS

Alcmena, mother of a hero-son,  
Come forth, give ear to these most welcome words;  
For travelling long in spirit hast thou fainted  
Lest those which now are come should ne'er return

*Enter ALCMENA from the temple*

ALCMENA

What means this outcry filling all the house?  
How, hath a herald from then Argos come  
Again to outrage thee? My strength is weakness,  
Yet of this thing, O stranger, be assured,  
Never, while I live, shalt thou hale these hence, 650  
Else be I counted mother of Hercules  
No more, for thou, if thou lay hand on these,  
With two old foes shalt have inglorious strife

IOLAUS

Fear not, grey queen, nor quake no herald he  
From Argos cometh bearing hests of foes

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί γὰρ βοὴν ἔστησας ἄγγελον φόβου ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὅπως βαίης πέλας

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκ ἦσμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτα τίς γάρ ἐσθ' ὅδε ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἦκοντα παῖδα παιδὸς ἀγγέλλει σέθεν

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

660 ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν  
ἀτὰρ τί χώρα τῇδε προσβαλὼν πόδα  
ποῦ νῦν ἄπεστι ; τίς νιν εἶργε συμφορὰ  
σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῦρ' ἐμὴν τέρψαι φρένα ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσεται θ' ὃν ἦλθ' ἔχων

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοῦδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου μέτεστι δῆ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μέτεστιν ἡμῶν δ' ἔργον ἱστορεῖν τάδε

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν πεπραγμένων μαθεῖν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι πλήθος συμμάχων πάρεστ' ἔχων ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πολλούς· ἀριθμὸν δ' ἄλλον οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

670 ἴσασιν, οἶμαι, ταῦτ' Ἀθηναίων πρόμοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἴσασι καὶ δὴ λαιὸν ἔστηκεν κέρας

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἤδη γὰρ ὥς εἰς ἔργον ὥπλισται στρατός ;



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

Why then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear ?

IOLAUS

That thou before this temple might'st draw nigh

ALCMENA

This was not in my thought —now who is this ?

IOLAUS

He bringeth tidings Thy son's son is here

ALCMENA

Hail also thou for this thine heralding ! 660  
But wherefore absent, if he hath set foot  
In this land ?—where ?—what hap hath hindered him  
From coming with thee to make glad mine heart ?

HENCHMAN

The host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it

ALCMENA

Such matter appertaineth not to me

IOLAUS

It doth—though my part be to inquire thereof

HENCHMAN

What wouldst thou know concerning things achieved ?

IOLAUS

How great a host of allies hath he brought ?

HENCHMAN

Many their tale I cannot tell save thus

IOLAUS

All this, I trow the chiefs Athenian know ? 670 .

HENCHMAN

They know yea, on their left he stands arrayed

IOLAUS

Ha, is the host already armed for fight ?

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

καὶ δὴ παρήκται σφάγια τάξεων ἐκάς

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι δ' ἔστ' ἄπωθεν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὥστ' ἐξορᾶσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐμφανῶς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντα, μὼν τάσσοντα πολέμιων στίχας,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἡκάζομεν ταῦτ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐξηκούομεν

ἄλλ' εἴμ' ἐρήμους δεσπότας τοῦμὸν μέρος

οὐκ ἂν θέλοιμι πολέμοισι συμβαλεῖν

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

680

κἄγωγε σὺν σοί· ταῦτὰ γὰρ φροντίζομεν,

φίλοις παρόντες, ὥς ἔοιγμεν, ὠφελεῖν

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἥκιστα πρὸς σοῦ μῶρον ἦν εἰπεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴ μετασχεῖν γ' ἀλκίμου μάχης φίλοις

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἐν ὄψει τραῦμα μὴ δρώσης χερὸς

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δ' ; οὐ θένοιμι καὶ ἐγὼ δι' ἀσπίδος,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θένοις ἄν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἂν πέσοις

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἔμ' ἐχθρῶν προσβλέπων ἀνέξεται

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ τᾶν, ἥ ποτ' ἦν ῥώμη σέθεν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἄλλ' οὖν μαχοῦμαί γ' ἀριθμὸν οὐκ ἐλάσσοσι.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yea, and the victims brought without the ranks

IOLAUS

And distant how far is the Argive spear?

HENCHMAN

So that thou plainly mayst discern their chief

IOLAUS

What doth he?—marshals he the foemen's lines?

HENCHMAN

So made we guess not plainly could we hear  
But I must go I would not that without me,  
Though fault of mine, my lords should clash with  
foes

IOLAUS

And I with thee my purpose is as thine,—  
As meet is,—to be there and help my friends

680

HENCHMAN

Nay, nowise worthy thee were idle talk!

IOLAUS

Nor worthy of me to help not friends in fight!

HENCHMAN

The glance can deal no wound, if hand strike not

IOLAUS

How? Cannot I withal smite through a shield?

HENCHMAN

Smite?—yea, but thou thyself ere then mightst fall

IOLAUS

There is no foe shall dare to meet mine eyes

HENCHMAN

Thou hast not, good my lord, thine olden strength

IOLAUS

Yet foes by tale not fewer will I fight

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

690 σμικρὸν τὸ σὸν σήκωμα προστίθης φίλοις

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μή τοί μ' ἔρυκε δρᾶν παρσκευασμένον

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δρᾶν μὲν σύ γ' οὐχ οἶός τε, βούλεσθαι δ' ἴσως

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὥς μὴ μενοῦντα τᾶλλα σοι λέγειν πάρα

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πῶς οὖν ὀπλίτης τευχέων ἄτερ φανεῖ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἔνδον αἰχμάλωθ' ὄπλα

τοῖσδ', οἷσι χρησόμεσθα κάποδώσομεν

ζῶντες θανόντας δ' οὐκ ἀπαιτήσῃ θεός

ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' εἴσω κάπο πασσάλων ἐλὼν

ἔνεγχ' ὀπλίτην κόσμον ὥς τάχιστα μοι

700 αἰσχροὺν γὰρ οἰκούρημα γίγνεται τόδε,  
τοὺς μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ δειλῖα μένειν

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λῆμα μὲν οὐπω στόρνυσι χρόνος

τὸ σόν, ἀλλ' ἤβᾶ σῶμα δὲ φροῦδον

τί πονεῖς ἄλλως ἢ σέ μὲν βλάψει,

σμικρὰ δ' ὀνήσει πόλιν ἡμετέραν,

χρῆν γνωσιμαχεῖν σὴν ἡλικίαν,

τὰ δ' ἀμήχαν' ἔαν οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως

ἦβην κτήσῃ πάλιν αὖθις

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί χρήμα μέλλεις σῶν φρενῶν οὐκ ἔνδον ὦν

710 λιπεῖν μ' ἔρημον σὺν τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἀλκή σοι δὲ χρὴ τούτων μέλειν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Scant weight into thy friends' scale wilt thou cast. 690

IOLAUS

Hinder me not I am wrought up for the deed

HENCHMAN

For deeds no power thou hast,—hast will, perchance

IOLAUS

Talk as thou wilt, so I bide not behind

HENCHMAN

With mailed men how shalt thou unarmed appear?

IOLAUS

There hang within yon fane arms battle-won

These will I use, and, if I live, restore,—

The God will not require them of the slain

Pass thou within, and from the nails take down,

And bring with speed to me, that warrior-gear

[*Exit* HENCHMAN

Shameful it is—this loitering at home, 700

That some should fight, some, craven souls, hang back!

CHORUS

Not yet may the years quell thy spirit,

Young in heart, though thy strength be no more!

Why toil to thine hurt but in vain?

Small help of thee Athens should gain

Let thine eld yet be wise, and refrain

From things hopeless thou canst not inherit

Yet again the lost prowess of yore

ALCMENA

Art thou beside thyself?—what, meanest thou

To leave me and my children thus forlorn? 710

IOLAUS

Yea, men must fight For these must thou take  
thought

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ; ἦν θάνῃς σύ, πῶς ἐγὼ σωθήσομαι ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

παιδὸς μελήσει παισὶ τοῖς λελειμμένοις

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἦν δ' οὖν, ὃ μὴ γένοιτο, χρήσονται τύχῃ ,

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' οὐ προδώσουσίν σε, μὴ τρέσης, ξένοι

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοσούνδε γάρ τοι θάρσος, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἔχω

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ Ζηνὶ τῶν σῶν, οἶδ' ἐγώ, μέλει πόνων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φεῦ

Ζεὺς ἐξ ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἀκούσεται κακῶς

εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ὅσιος αὐτὸς οἶδεν εἰς ἐμέ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

720 πλων μὲν ἤδη τήνδ' ὀρᾷς παντευχίαν  
φθάνοις δ' ἂν οὐκ ἂν τοῖσδε συγκρύπτων δέμας·  
ὥς ἐγγὺς ἀγών, καὶ μάλιστ' Ἄρης στυγεῖ  
μέλλοντας εἰ δὲ τευχέων φοβεῖ βάρος,  
νῦν μὲν πορεύου γυμνός, ἐν δὲ τάξεσιν  
κόσμῳ πυκάζου τῷδ'· ἐγὼ δ' οἴσω τέως

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πρόχειρ' ἔχων  
τεύχῃ κόμιζε, χειρὶ δ' ἐνθες ὀξύην,  
λαιὸν τ' ἐπαιρε πῆχυν, εὐθύνων πόδα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦ παιδαγωγεῖν γὰρ τὸν ὀπλίτην χρεών ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

730 ὄρνιθος εἶνεκ' ἀσφαλῶς πορευτέον.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

But, if thou perish, how shall I be saved ?

IOLAUS

Thy son's sons which are left shall care for thee

ALCMENA

But if—which God forbid—ought hap to them ?

IOLAUS

Our hosts shall not forsake thee    Fear not thou

ALCMENA

Mine heart's last stay are these    none else have I

IOLAUS

Nay, Zeus, I know, remembereth thy griefs.

• ALCMENA

Ah ! (*sighs heavily*)

Never of me shall ill be said of Zeus ,

But is he just to me-ward ?    Himself knows '

[*Returns within temple*]

*Re-enter* HENCHMAN

HENCHMAN

Lo, here thou seest a warrior's gear complete

720

Make all speed to encase in these thy frame

The fight is nigh, and most the War-god loathes

Loroters    If thou fear the armour's weight,

Go mailless now, and lap thee mid the ranks

In this array    till then will I bear all

IOLAUS

Well hast thou said    yet ready to mine hand

Bing on the arms    set in mine hand a spear

Bear up my left arm, ordering my steps

HENCHMAN

How, lead as a little child the man-at-arms !

IOLAUS

For the omen's sake un stumbling must I go,

730

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἴθ' ἦσθα δυνατὸς δρᾶν ὅσον πρόθυμος εἶ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔπειγε λειφθεὶς δεινὰ πείσομαι μάχης.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σύ τοι βραδύνεις, οὐκ ἐγώ, δοκῶν τι δρᾶν

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὔκουν ὀρᾶς μου κῶλον ὥς ἐπείγεται ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὀρῶ δοκοῦντα μᾶλλον ἢ σπεύδοντά σε

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἡνίκ' ἂν λεύσσης μ' ἐκεῖ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δρῶντα , βουλοίμην δ' ἂν εὐτυχοῦντά γε

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

δι' ἀσπίδος θείοντα πολεμίων τινά

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἰ δὴ ποθ' ἤξομέν γε τοῦτο γὰρ φόβος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ·

740

εἴθ', ὦ βραχίων, οἶον ἡβήσαντά σε  
μεμνήμεθ' ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ  
Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένοιό μοι  
τοιοῦτος οἷος ἂν τροπὴν Εὐρυσθέως  
θείμην ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ κακὸς μένειν δόρυ  
ἔστιν δ' ἐν ὀλβῳ καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔχον,  
εὐψυχίας δόκησις· οἰόμεσθα γὰρ  
τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γᾶ καὶ παννύχιος σελάνα

στρ α'

καὶ λαμπρόταται θεοῦ

750

φαεσίμβροτοι αὐγαί,  
ἀγγελίαν μοι ἐνέγκαιτ'·



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Would thou wert strong to do, as thou art fain !

IOLAUS

On !—woe, if I be laggard for the fray !

HENCHMAN

Not I, but thou art slow, who dream'st performance

IOLAUS

Seest thou not how onward speed my limbs ?

HENCHMAN

More thine imagining see I than thy speed.

IOLAUS

Thou shalt not say so when thou seest me there—

HENCHMAN

Achieving what ?—I fain would see thy triumph !

IOLAUS

Smiting some foeman, yea, clear through the shield

HENCHMAN

If we win ever thither,—this I doubt

IOLAUS

Would, O mine arm, that, as I call to mind 740

Thy young strength, when thou didst with Hercules

Smite Sparta, such a helper unto me

Thou wouldst become ! How mightily would I rout

Eurystheus—craven he to abide the spear !

With high estate is this delusion linked,

Repute for courage high for still we deem

That he who prospereth knoweth all things well

[*Exeunt*

CHORUS

(*Str. 1*)

Earth !—Moon, which reign'st the livelong night !—

O glorious radiancy

Of Him who giveth mortals light,

Flash tidings unto me !

750

ἰαχῆσατε δ' οὐρανῷ  
καὶ παρὰ θρόνον ἀρχέταν,  
γλαυκᾶς τ' ἐν Ἀθάνας  
μέλλω τᾶς πατριώτιδος γᾶς,  
μέλλω καὶ ὑπὲρ δόμων,  
ἰκέτας ὑποδεχθεῖς,  
κίνδυνον πολὺν τεμείν σιδάρφ

760 δεινὸν μὲν πόλιν ὡς Μυκῆνας ἀντ α'  
εὐδαίμονα καὶ δορὸς  
πολυαίνετον ἀλκᾷ  
μῆνιν ἐμᾷ χθονὶ κεύθειν·  
κακὸν δ', ὃ πόλις, εἰ ξένους  
ἰκτῆρας παραδώσομεν  
κελεύσμασιν Ἀργούς.  
Ζεὺς μοι σύμμαχος, οὐ φοβοῦμαι,  
Ζεὺς μοι χάριν ἐνδίκως  
ἔχει οὐποτε θνατῶν  
ἦσσονες παρ' ἐμοὶ θεοὶ<sup>1</sup> φανοῦνται.

770 ἀλλ', ὃ πότνια, σὸν γὰρ οὐδας στρ β'  
γᾶς, σὸν καὶ πόλις, ἅς σὺ μάτηρ  
δέσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ,  
πόρευσον ἄλλα τὸν οὐ δικαίως  
τᾷδ' ἐπάγοντα δορυσσοῦν  
στρατὸν Ἀργόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἐμᾷ γ' ἀρετᾷ  
δίκαιός εἰμ' ἐκπεσεῖν μελάβρων.

780 ἐπεὶ σοι πολύθυστος αἰεὶ ἀντ. β'  
τιμὰ κραίνεται, οὐδὲ λάθει  
μηνῶν φθινὰς ἡμέρα,  
νέων τ' αἰοδαὶ χορῶν τε μολπαί.

<sup>1</sup> Dindorf for MSS ποτ' ἂν εἴτ' ἐμοῦ,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Shout triumph up through heaven's expansion,  
Up to the throne of all men's Lord,  
Up to grey-eyed Athena's mansion '  
I for my land am battle-dight,  
Arrayed for hearth and home to fight,  
To shear through danger with the sword,  
For right of sanctuary

Dread peril, that Mycenae-town— (Ant 1)  
The mighty burg, whose hand 760  
The wide world through hath spear-renown,—  
Nurse wrath against my land '  
Yet shame, O shame, were thine, my city,  
If we must yield to Argos' hest  
Suppliants,—if fear must cast out pity '  
Zeus champions me, I tread fear down  
Zeus' favour is my right, my crown  
In mine esteem above the Blest  
Never shall mortals stand

But, O Queen,—for our soil, for our city is thine, (Str 2)  
And to thee be we given— 770  
O our Mother, our Mistress, O Warder Divine,  
Yon despiser of heaven,  
Who from Aigos brings storm-rush of spearmen  
upon me, [won me  
Chase afar '—no such guerdon hath righteousness  
As from home to be driven '

For the sacrifice-homage is rendered thee aye (Ant 2)  
When the month waneth, bringing  
The day when young voices to thee chant the lay,  
When the dancers are singing, 780

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἀνεμόεντι δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ  
ὀλολύγματα παννυχίοις ὑπὸ παρ-  
θένων ἰαχεῖ ποδῶν κρότοισιν

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δέσποινα, μύθους σοί τε συντομωτάτους  
κλύειν ἐμοί τε τῷδε καλλίστους φέρω  
νικῶμεν ἐχθροὺς καὶ τροπαῖ' ἰδρύεται  
παντευχίαν ἔχοντα πολεμίων σέθεν

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ φίλταθ', ἥδε σ' ἡμέρα διήλασεν  
ἡλευθερώσθαι τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλεμασιν  
790 μιᾶς δέ μ' οὐπω συμφορᾶς ἐλευθεροῖς·  
φόβος γὰρ εἴ μοι ζῶσιν οὓς ἐγὼ θέλω

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ζῶσιν μέγιστόν γ' εὐκλεεῖς κατὰ στρατόν

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὁ μὲν γέρων οὖν ἔστιν Ἰόλεως ἔτι ,

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα· πράξας δ' ἐκ θεῶν κάλλιστα δή.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ἔστι ; μὲν τι κεδνὸν ἡγωνίζετο ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

νέος μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέροντος αὐθις αὖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας· ἀλλὰ σ' εὐτυχῇ φίλων  
μάχης ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἷς μου λόγος σοι πάντα σημανεῖ τάδε.  
800 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοισιν ὀπλίτην στρατὸν  
κατὰ στόμ' ἐκτείνοντες ἀντετάξαμεν,  
ἐκβὰς τεθρίππων Ὕλλος ἀρμάτων πόδα

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

When the wind-haunted hill with the beat of the  
glancing [dancing  
White feet of fair guls through the night-season  
And with glad cries, is ringing

*ALCMENA comes again out of the temple Enter SERVANT*

SERVANT

Mistress, I bring thee tidings passing brief  
To hear, and passing fair for me to tell  
Our foes are smitten trophies now are reared  
Hung with war-harness of thine enemies

ALCMENA

Dear friend, this day hath wrought thy severance  
From bondage, for the tidings thou hast brought  
Yet from one ill not yet thou freest me—  
Fear touching those I love, if yet they live

790

SERVANT

They live, in all the host most high-renowned

ALCMENA

The old man Iolaus—lives he yet?

SERVANT

Yea, and by Heaven's help hath done gloriously

ALCMENA

What is it?—hath he wrought some knightly deed?

SERVANT

He from an old man hath become a youth

ALCMENA

Marvels thou speakest yet I may thee tell  
First how the fight was victory for our friends

SERVANT

One speech of mine shall set forth all to thee  
When host against host we had ranged the array  
Of men-at-arms far-stretching face to face,  
Then from his chariot Hyllus lighted down,

800 .

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἔσθη μέσοισιν ἐν μεταιχμίοις δορός  
 κᾶπειτ' ἔλεξεν· ὦ στρατῆγ' ὃς Ἀργόθεν  
 ἦκεις, τί τήνδε γαῖαν οὐκ εἰάσαμεν ;  
 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας οὐδὲν ἐργάσει κακὸν  
 ἀνδρὸς στερήσας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μόνος μόνῳ  
 μάχην συνάψας, ἥ κτανὼν ἄγου λαβὼν  
 810 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἥ θανὼν ἐμοὶ  
 τιμὰς πατρώους καὶ δόμους ἔχειν ἄφες.  
 στρατὸς δ' ἐπήνεσ', εἷς τ' ἀπαλλαγὰς πόνων  
 καλῶς λελέχθαι μῦθον εἷς τ' εὐφρυχίαν  
 ὁ δ' οὔτε τοὺς κλύοντας αἰδεσθεὶς λόγων  
 οὔτ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ δειλίαν στρατηγὸς ὢν,  
 ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκίμου δορός,  
 ἀλλ' ἦν κάκιστος εἴτα τοιοῦτος γεγὼς  
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους ἦλθε δουλώσων γόνους.  
 "Ἴλλος μὲν οὖν ἀπώχετ' εἰς ταξιν πάλιν·  
 μάντις δ', ἐπειδὴ μονομάχου δι' ἀσπίδος  
 820 διαλλαγὰς ἔγνωσαν οὐ τελουμένας,  
 ἔσφαζον, οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀλλ' ἀφίεσαν  
 λαιμῶν † βροτείων<sup>1</sup> εὐθύς οὔριον φόνον·  
 οἱ δ' ἄρματ' εἰσέβαινον, οἱ δ' ὑπ' ἀσπίδων  
 πλευροῖς ἐκρυπτον πλεύρ'. Ἀθηναίων δ' ἄναξ  
 στρατῷ παρήγγειλ' οἷα χρή τὸν εὐγενῆ  
 ὦ ξυμπολῖται, τῇ τε βοσκούσῃ χθονὶ  
 καὶ τῇ τεκούσῃ νῦν τιν' ἀρκέσαι χρεῶν  
 ὁ δ' αὖ τό τ' Ἄργος μὴ καταισχύῃαι θέλειν  
 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας συμμάχους ἐλίσσεται.  
 830 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐσήμην' ὄρθιον Τυρσηνικῇ  
 σάλπιγγι καὶ συνῆψαν ἀλλήλοισι μάχην,  
 πόσον τιν' αὐχεῖς πάταγον ἀσπίδων βρέμειν,

<sup>1</sup> An unlikely word here    Paley suggests *βοτείων*.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And midway stood between the spearmen-lines,  
 And cried, "O captain of the host, who hast come  
 From Argos, wherefore spare we not this land ?  
 Lo, if thou rob Mycenae of one man,  
 Naught shalt thou hurt her —come now, man to man  
 Fight thou with me so, slaying, lead away  
 Hercules' sons, or, falling, leave to me  
 My father's honour and halls to have and hold " 810

"Yea!" the host shouted, counting this well said  
 For valour and for rest from battle-toil  
 Yet he, unshamed for them that heard the challenge,  
 And his own cowardice, wai-chief though he were,  
 Dared not draw nigh the essay of valour's spear,  
 But was sheer craven And this dastard wretch  
 Came to enslave the sons of Hercules !  
 So to the ranks again went Hyllus back  
 And the priests, knowing now that end of strife  
 Should not by clash of champion shields be attained, 820  
 Did sacrifice, nor tarried, but straightway  
 Spilled from the victims' throats the auspicious blood.

Then mounted these their cars their shield-rims  
 those  
 Before their bodies cast But Athens' king  
 Cried to his host, as high-born chieftain should  
 "Countrymen, now must each one play the man  
 For this land that hath borne and nurtured him!"  
 The while that other prayed his battle-aid  
 To brook not shame to Argos and Mycenae  
 But when the Tuscan trumpet gave the sign 830  
 High-shrilling, and the war-hosts clashed in fight,  
 How mighty a crash of bucklers thundered then—

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

πῶσον τινὰ στεναγμὸν οἰμωγὴν θ' ὁμοῦ ;  
 τὰ πρῶτα μὲν νυν πίτυλος Ἀργείου δορὸς  
 ἐρρήξαθ' ἡμᾶς· εἴτ' ἐχώρησαν πάλιν  
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ ποὺς ἐπαλλαχθεὶς ποδί,  
 ἀνὴρ δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ στὰς ἐκαρτέρει μάχῃ·  
 πολλοὶ δ' ἔπιπτον, ἦν δὲ δύο κελεύσματα <sup>1</sup>  
 ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας—ὦ τὸν Ἀργείων γύην  
 σπείροντες—οὐκ ἀρήξετ' αἰσχύνην πόλει ,  
 μόλις δὲ πάντα δρῶντες οὐκ ἄτερ πόνων  
 ἐτρεψάμεσθ' Ἀργεῖον εἰς φυγὴν δόρου  
 κἀνταῦθ' ὁ πρέσβυς Ὕλλον ἐξορμώμενον  
 ἰδὼν, ὀρέξας ἰκέτευσε δεξιᾶν  
 Ἰόλαος ἐμβῆσαί νιν ἵππειον δίφρον  
 λαβὼν δὲ χερσὶν ἡνίας Εὐρυσθέως  
 πῶλοις ἐπείχε τὰπὸ τοῦδ' ἤδη κλύων  
 λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄλλων, δεῦρο δ' αὐτὸς εἰσιδὼν.  
 Παλληνίδος γὰρ σεμνὸν ἐκπερὼν πάγον  
 δίας Ἀθάνας, ἄρμ' ἰδὼν Εὐρυσθέως,  
 ἡράσαθ' Ὕβην Ζηνὶ θ', ἡμέραν μίαν  
 νέος γενέσθαι κἀποτίσασθαι δίκην  
 ἐχθροὺς κλύειν δὴ θαύματος πάρεστί σοι.  
 δισσὼ γὰρ ἄστέρ' ἵππικοῖς ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς  
 σταθέντ' ἐκρυψαν ἄρμα λυγαίῳ νέφει·  
 σὸν δὲ λέγουσι παῖδά γ' οἱ σοφώτεροι  
 Ὕβην θ' ὃ δ' ὄρφνης ἐκ δυσαιθρίου νέων  
 βραχιόνων ἔδειξεν ἡβητὴν τύπον  
 αἰρεῖ δ' ὁ κλεινὸς Ἰόλεως Εὐρυσθέως  
 τέτρωρον ἄρμα πρὸς πέτραις Σκειρωνίσι.  
 δεσμοῖς τε δήσας χεῖρας ἀκροθίνιον  
 κάλλιστον ἤκει τὸν στρατηλάτην ἄγων

<sup>1</sup> Dindorf for MSS τοῦ κελεύματος



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Think'st thou?—what multitudinous groan and  
shriek!

At first the onset of the Argive spear  
Burst through our ranks then gave they back again  
Anon foot stood in grapple locked with foot,  
Man fronting man, hard-wrestling in the fray  
Fast, fast they fell Cheers ever answered cheers—  
“Dwellers in Athens!”—“Tillers of the land  
Of Argos!”—“from dishonour save your town!” 840  
With uttermost endeavour and strong strain  
Scarce turned we unto flight the Argive spear

Thereat old Iolaus, marking where  
Hyllus charged on, with outstretched hand besought  
That he would set him on a courser-car  
Then the reins grasped he, then the steeds he sped  
After Eurystheus All the rest I tell  
From others' lips the former things I saw  
For, as he passed beyond Pallene's Hill 850  
Sacred to Pallas, spying Eurystheus' car  
He prayed to Zeus and Hebe, for one day  
To be made young, and wreak the vengeance due  
On foes.—now shalt thou hear a miracle.  
For two stars rested on the chariot-yoke,  
And into gloom of shadow threw the car,  
And these, diviners say, were thy great son  
And Hebe Then from out that murky gloom  
He flashed—a youth, with mighty-moulded arms!

And glorious Iolaus overtook  
By the Scironian Rocks Eurystheus' car 860  
He hath bound his hands with gyves, and hath returned  
Bringing the crown of victory, that chief

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν ὄλβιον πάροιθε· τῇ δὲ νῦν τύχῃ  
βροτοῖς ἅπασι λαμπρὰ κηρύσσει μαθεῖν,  
τὸν εὐτυχεῖν δοκοῦντα μὴ ζηλοῦν, πρὶν ἂν  
θανόντ' ἴδῃ τις ὥς ἐφήμεροι τύχαι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ τροπαίε, νῦν ἐμοὶ δεινοῦ φόβου  
ἐλεύθερον πάρεστιν ἡμάρ εἰσιδεῖν

### ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

870 ὦ Ζεῦ, χρόνῳ μὲν τᾶμ' ἐπεσκέψω κακά,  
χάριν δ' ὅμως σοι τῶν πεπραγμένων ἔχω  
καὶ παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσ' ἐγὼ  
θεοῖς ὁμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς  
ὦ τέκνα, νῦν δὴ νῦν ἐλεύθεροι πόνων,  
ἐλεύθεροι δὲ τοῦ κακῶς ὀλουμένου  
Εὐρυσθέως ἔσεσθε καὶ πόλιν πατρὸς  
ὄψεσθε, κλήρους δ' ἐμβατεύσετε χθονός,  
καὶ θεοῖς πατρώοις θύσεθ', ὧν ἀπειργάμενοι  
ξένοι πλανήτην εἴχετε' ἄθλιον βίον  
880 ἀτὰρ τί κεύθων Ἰόλεως σοφόν ποτε  
Εὐρυσθέως ἐφείσαθ' ὥστε μὴ κτανεῖν ;  
λέξον· παρ' ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφὸν τόδε,  
ἐχθροὺς λαβόντα μὴ ἀποτίσασθαι δίκην

### ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τὸ σὸν προτιμῶν, ὥς νιν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἴδοις  
ἀλόντα <sup>1</sup> καὶ σῇ δεσποτούμενον χερὶ  
οὐ μὴν ἐκόντα γ' αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν  
ἔξενξ' ἀνάγκῃ καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐβούλετο  
ζῶν εἰς σὸν ἐλθεῖν ὄμμα καὶ δοῦναι δίκην  
ἄλλ', ὦ γεραία, χαῖρε καὶ μέμνησό μοι  
ὃ πρῶτον εἶπας, ἥνικ' ἠρχόμην λόγου,

<sup>1</sup> Heimsoeth for MSS κρατοῦντα Reiske, κρατούσα

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

So prosperous once , but by his fate this day  
Clear warning to all men he publisheth  
To envy not the seeming-fortunate, ere  
He die, since fortune dureth but a day

### CHORUS

O Victory-wafter Zeus, now is it mine  
To see a day from dark fear disenthralled !

### ALCMENA

Zeus, late on mine affliction hast thou looked ;  
Yet thank I thee for all that thou hast wrought 870  
Now know I of a surety that my son  
Dwelleth with Gods —ere this I thought not so  
O children, now, yea now from trouble free,  
And from Eurystheus, doomed to a dastard's death,  
Free shall ye be, shall see your father's city,  
And tread the lot of your inheritance,  
And sacrifice to your fathers' Gods, from whom  
Banned ye have known a wretched homeless life  
But for what veiled wise purpose Iolaus  
Hath spared Eurystheus, that he slew him not, 880  
Tell , for in our sight nothing wise is this  
To capture foes and not requite their wrong

### SERVANT

Of thought for thee, that him thine eyes might see  
Held in thy power, and subject to thine hand  
He bowed him 'neath the yoke of strong constraint  
Sore loth to come, for nowise he desired  
Living to meet thine eye and taste thy vengeance  
Farewell, grey queen . forget not that which erst  
Thou saidst to me when I began my tale

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

890 ἔλευθερώσειν μ'· ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοιοῖσδε χρή  
ἀψευδὲς εἶναι τοῖσι γενναίοις στόμα

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοὶ χορὸς μὲν ἡδύς, εἰ λίγεια στρ. α'  
λωτοῦ χάρις ἐνὶ δαιτί,  
εἴη δ' εὐχαρις Ἀφροδίτα  
τερπνὸν δέ τι καὶ φίλων ἄρ'  
εὐτυχίαν ιδέσθαι  
τῶν πάρος οὐ δοκούντων  
πολλὰ γὰρ τίκτει  
Μοῖρα τελεσσιδώτερ'  
900 Αἰὼν τε Κρόνου παῖς

ἔχεις ὁδὸν τιν', ὦ πόλις, δίκαιον· ἀντ. α'  
οὐ χρή ποτε τοῦδ' ἀφέσθαι,  
τιμᾶν θεούς· ὁ δὲ μὴ σε φάσκων  
ἐγγὺς μανιῶν ἐλαύνει,  
δεικνυμένων ἐλέγχων  
τῶνδ' ἐπίσημα γάρ τοι  
θεὸς παραγγέλλει,  
τῶν ἀδίκων παραιρῶν  
φρονήματος αἶε

910 ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βεβακῶς στρ. β'  
τεὸς γόνος, ὦ γεραιά·  
φεύγω λόγον ὥς τὸν Ἄϊδα  
δόμον κατέβα, πυρὸς  
δεινᾷ φλογὶ σῶμα δαισθεῖς  
Ἥβας τ' ἔρατὸν χροῖζει  
λέχος χρυσέαν κατ' αὐλάν.  
ὦ Ὑμέναιε, δισσοὺς  
παῖδας Διὸς ἡξίωσας.

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Make me free man , for, touching suchlike boons, 890  
The lips that he not best beseem the noble [*Exit*

CHORUS

(*Str* 1)

Sweet to me is the dance, when clear-pealing  
    Ring the flutes o'er the wine,  
And when Love cometh sweetly in-stealing  
    Yea, and gladness is mine  
To look on my dear ones well-faring  
Which aforetime were whelmed in despairing  
Many blessings fate cometh on-bearing,  
With whom Time paceth on, bringing healing,  
    Cronos' offspring divine 900

(*Ant* 1)

In justice, my land, thy path lieth  
    This thy crown yield to none,  
That thou fearest the Gods who denieth,  
    Into madness hath run  
Lo, what sign is revealed for a token,  
How the pride of wrong-doers is broken  
Evermore, how to-day hath God spoken,  
How the voice of Omnipotence crieth  
    In the deeds he hath done '

(*Str* 2) 910

He hath died not '—to heaven hath risen  
    Thy scion, grey queen  
Tell me never that Hades' dim prison  
    His long home hath been '  
Nay, he soared through the flames leaping round  
    him ,  
And with honour the Spousal-god crowned him,  
And to Hebe with love-links he bound him,—  
Zeus' son to Zeus' daughter,—where glisten  
    Heaven's halls with gold-sheen

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

920

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

930

940

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ μῖσος, ἦκεις, εἰλέ σ' ἡ Δίκη χρόνῳ,  
 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι δεῦρ' ἐπίστρεψον κᾶρα  
 καὶ τλῆθι τοὺς σοὺς προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον  
 ἐχθρούς· κρατεῖ γὰρ νῦν γε κοῦ κρατεῖς ἔτι  
 ἐκεῖνος εἰ σύ, βούλομαι γὰρ εἰδέναι,  
 ὃς πολλὰ μὲν τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπου 'στὶ νῦν ἐμὸν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

How oft be life's strands interwisted ! (Ant 2)  
Of Athena, men say, 920

Was their sire in hard empise assisted ,  
And the city this day,  
And the folk of that Goddess hath saved them,  
And hath curbed him whose blood-lust had craved  
them,

Whose tyranny fain had enslaved them  
In my cause never pride be enlisted  
Insatiate for prey

*Enter MESSENGER with guards leading EURYSTHEUS in chains*

MESSENGER

O queen, thou seest,—yet shall it be told,—  
Leading Eurystheus unto thee we come,  
A sight unhop'd, which ne'er he looked should hap, 930  
Who ne'er had thought to fall into thine hands,  
When from Mycenae with vast shield-essay  
He marched, his pride o'er justice soaring high,  
To smite our Athens But our destinies  
Fortune reversed, and changed them, his for ours.  
Hyllus I left and valiant Iolaus  
Raising the victory-trophy unto Zeus ,  
But me they charge to bring this man to thee,  
Being fain to glad thine heart, for 'tis most sweet  
To see a foe triumphant once brought low, 940

ALCMENA

Loathed wretch, art come ? Justice at last hath  
trapped thee !

Nay then, first turn thou hitherward thine head,  
And dare to look thine enemies in the face  
No more art thou the master, but the thrall !  
Art thou he—for I would be certified—  
Who didst presume to load thine outrages,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

950 παῖδ' ἡξίωσας, ὦ πανοῦργ', ἐφύβρῖσαι;  
 τί γὰρ σὺ κείνουν οὐκ ἔτλης καθυβρίσαι,  
 δς καὶ παρ' ᾿Αἰδην ζῶντά νιν κατήγαγες,  
 ὕδρας λέοντάς τ' ἑξαπολλύναι λέγων  
 ἔπεμπες. ἄλλα δ' οἷ' ἐμηχανῶ κακὰ  
 σιγῶ· μακρὸς γὰρ μῦθος ἂν γένοιτό μοι.  
 κοῦκ ἤρκεσέν σοι ταῦτα τολμῆσαι μόνον,  
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάσης κἀμέ καὶ τέκν' Ἑλλάδος  
 ἤλανυνες ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,  
 τοὺς μὲν γέροντας, τοὺς δὲ νηπίους ἔτι.  
 ἀλλ' ἡῦρες ἄνδρας καὶ πόλιν ἐλεύθερον,  
 οἷ' σ' οὐκ ἔδεισαν δεῖ σε κατθανεῖν κακῶς,  
 καὶ κερδανεῖς ἅπαντα· χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἅπαξ  
 960 θνήσκειν σὲ πολλὰ πῆματ' ἐξεργασμένον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀνυστὸν τόνδε σοι κατακτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλλως ἄρ' αὐτὸν αἰχμάλωτον εἵλομεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

εἴργει δὲ δὴ τίς τόνδε μὴ θανεῖν νόμος,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τῆσδε χώρας προστάταισιν οὐ δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δὴ τόδ', ἐχθροὺς τοισίδ' οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐχ ὄντιν' ἂν γε ζῶνθ' ἔλωσιν ἐν μάχῃ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

καὶ ταῦτα δόξανθ' ᾿Τλλος ἐξηνέσχετο,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χρῆν δ' αὐτόν, οἶμαι, τῇδ' ἀπιστῆσαι χθονί;

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

χρῆν τόνδε μὴ ζῆν μηδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος.



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Cartiff, on my son—whereso now he be ?  
For wherein didst thou fear to outrage him,  
Who didst to Hades speed him living down,  
Didst send him, bidding him destroy thee Hydias      950  
And lions ? All the ills thou didst devise  
I name not, for the tale were all too long  
Nor yet sufficed thee this alone to dare ,  
But from all Hellas me and mine didst thou  
Still hunt, though suppliant to the Gods we sat,  
These stricken in years, those little children yet  
But men, and a free city, hast thou found,  
Which feared thee not Now die the dastard's death  
Yet is thy death all gain thou ought'st to die  
Not one death, who hast wrought ills manifold      960

CHORUS

It may not be that thou shouldst slay this man !

MESSENGER

Captive in vain then have we taken him !

ALCMENA

Prthee what law withholdeth him from death ?

CHORUS

It pleaseth not the rulers of this land

ALCMENA

How ?—do these count it shame to slay their foes ?

CHORUS

Yea, such as they have ta'en in fight unslain

ALCMENA

Ay so ?—and this their doom hath Hyllus brooked ?

CHORUS

Should he, forsooth, defy this nation's will ?

ALCMENA

He should no more have lived, nor seen the light

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

970 τότ' ἠδικήθη πρῶτον οὐ θανὼν ὅδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκουν ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἐν καλῷ δοῦναι δίκην;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτον ὅστις ἂν κατακτάνοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἔγωγε καίτοι φημὶ καὶ εἶναι τινα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλὴν ἄρ' ἔξεις μέμψιν, εἰ δράσεις τόδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φιλῶ πόλιν τήνδ'· οὐδὲν ἀντιλεκτέον  
τοῦτον δ', ἐπείπερ χεῖρας ἤλθεν εἰς ἐμάς,  
οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται  
πρὸς ταῦτα τὴν θρασεῖαν ὅστις ἂν θέλῃ  
καὶ τὴν φρονοῦσαν μεῖζον ἢ γυναῖκα χρῆ  
980 λέξει· τὸ δ' ἔργον τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ πεπράξεται

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινόν τι καὶ συγγνωστόν, ὦ γύναι, σ' ἔχει  
μῖσος πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε, γιγνώσκω καλῶς

ΕΤΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ

γύναι, σάφ' ἴσθι μή με θωπεύσουντά σε,  
μηδ' ἄλλο μηδὲν τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι  
λέξονθ' ὅθεν χρῆ δειλίαν ὀφλεῖν τινα  
ἐγὼ δὲ νεῖκος οὐχ ἐκὼν τόδ' ἠράμην·  
ἦδη γε σοὶ μὲν αὐτανέψιος γεγώς,  
τῷ σῷ δὲ παιδὶ συγγενῆς Ἡρακλέει  
ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἔχρηζον εἴτε μή, θεὸς γὰρ ἦν,  
990 "Ἡρα με κάμνειν τήνδ' ἔθηκε τὴν νόσον.  
ἐπεὶ δ' ἐκείνῳ δυσμένειαν ἠράμην  
καῖνων ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἀγωνιούμενος,  
πολλῶν σοφιστῆς πημάτων ἐγιγνόμεν

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Then was he wronged—to die not at the first 970

ALCMENA

So then 'twere just he suffered vengeance yet

CHORUS

None is there, none, would put him now to death

ALCMENA

That will I—some one I account myself

CHORUS

Thou shalt have bitter blame, if this thou do

ALCMENA

I love this city, let no man gainsay —

But, since this wretch hath come into mine hands,

There is of mortals none shall pluck him thence

Wherefore who will shall rail on the overbold,

On her that nursed for woman thoughts too high,

Yet shall this deed by me be brought to pass 980

CHORUS

A fearful hatred, yet a righteous, queen,

Thou hast against this man, I know full well

EURYSTHEUS

Woman, be sure I will not cringe to thee,

Nor utter any word beside, to save

My life, whence cowardice might stain my name

Yet of my will this feud I took not up

I knew myself born cousin unto thee,

And kinsman unto Hercules thy son

But, would I or no, 'twas Heaven that thrust me on

Heia with this affliction burdened me 990

But when I had made him once mine enemy,

And knew that I must wrestle out this strife,

Deviser I became of many pains,

# ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

καὶ πόλλ' ἔτικτον, νυκτὶ συνθακῶν αἰεί,  
ὅπως διώσας καὶ κατακτείνας ἔμους  
ἐχθροὺς τὸ λοιπὸν μὴ συνοικοίην φόβῳ,  
εἰδὼς μὲν οὐκ ἀριθμὸν ἀλλ' ἐτητύμῳς  
ἄνδρ' ὄντα τὸν σὸν παῖδα καὶ γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ὦν  
1000 ἀκούσεται τά γ' ἐσθλὰ χρηστὸς ὦν ἀνὴρ  
κείνου δ' ἀπαλλαχθέντος οὐκ ἐχρήν μ' ἄρα  
μισοῦμενον πρὸς τῶνδε καὶ ξυνειδότα  
ἐχθραν πατρώαν, πάντα κινήσαι πέτρον,  
κτείνοντα κᾶκβάλλοντα καὶ τεχνώμενον,  
τοιαῦτα δρῶντι τᾶμ' ἐγίγνετ' ἀσφαλῆ  
οὐκουν σύ γ' ἂν λαχοῦσα<sup>1</sup> τὰς ἐμὰς τύχας  
ἐχθροῦ λέοντος δυσμενῇ βλαστήματα  
ἤλαυνες ἂν κακοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως  
εἴσας οἰκεῖν Ἄργος; οὔτιν' ἂν πίθοις.  
1010 νῦν οὖν ἐπειδὴ μ' οὐ διώλεσαν τότε  
πρόθυμον ὄντα, τοῖσιν Ἑλλήνων νόμοις  
οὐχ ἄγνός εἰμι τῷ κτανόντι κατθανών  
πόλις δ' ἀφῆκε σωφρονούσα, τὸν θεὸν  
μεῖζον τίουσα τῆς ἐμῆς ἐχθρας πολὺ.  
ἃ γ' εἶπας ἀντήκουσας ἐντεύθεν δὲ χρή  
τὸν προστρόπαιον τόν τε γενναῖον καλεῖν.  
οὔτω γε μέντοι τᾶμ' ἔχει θανεῖν μὲν οὐ  
χρήζω, λιπὼν δ' ἂν οὐδὲν ἀχθοίμην βίον

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παραινέσαι σοι σμικρόν, Ἄλκμήνη, θέλω,  
τὸν ἄνδρ' ἀφεῖναι τόνδ', ἐπεὶ πόλει δοκεῖ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

1020 τί δ', ἣν θάνῃ τε καὶ πόλει πιθώμεθα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ λῶστ' ἂν εἴη· πῶς τὰδ' οὖν γενήσεται,

<sup>1</sup> Wecklein foi MSS ἀναλαβοῦσα,

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Aye scheming—Night sat by, and counselled me—  
How I might scatter and destroy my foes,  
And have thenceforth for housemate fear no more,  
Knowing thy son no cipher, but a man  
In very deed, for, though he be my foe,  
Praise shall he have, a very hero he

But, and of him, was I not even constrained— 1000  
Abhorred of these, ware of that heritage  
Of hate—to move each scorpion-hiding stone,  
By slaying, banishing, and plotting still?  
While thus I did, my safety was assured  
But thou, forsooth, had but my lot been thine,  
Hadst spared to persecute the infuriate whelps  
Left of thy foe the lion,—wisely rather  
Hadst let them dwell in Argos? I trow not

Now therefore since, when I was fain to die,  
They slew me not, by all the Hellene laws 1010  
My death pollution brings on whoso slays  
Wisely did Athens spare me, honouring more  
God, far above all enmity of me  
Thou art answered I must be hereafter named  
The Haunting Vengeance, and the Heroic Dead  
Thus is it with me—I long not for death,  
Yet to forsake life nowise shall I grieve

### CHORUS

Suffer one word of exhortation, queen  
Let this man go, for so the city wills

### ALCMENA

But—if he die, and I obey her still? 1020\*

### CHORUS

This should be best, yet how can this thing be?

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἐγὼ διδάξω ῥαδίως κτανούσα γὰρ  
τόνδ' εἶτα νεκρὸν τοῖς μετελθοῦσιν φίλων  
δώσω· τὸ γὰρ σῶμ' οὐκ ἀπιστήσω χθονί,  
οὗτος δὲ δώσει τὴν δίκην θανῶν ἐμοί.

ΕΤΡΥΣΘΕΤΣ

κτεῖν', οὐ παραιτοῦμαί σε· τήνδε δὲ πτόλιν,  
ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφῆκε καὶ κατηδέσθη κτανεῖν,  
χρησμῶ παλαιῷ Λοξίου δωρήσομαι,  
ὃς ὠφελήσει μείζον' ἢ δοκεῖν χρόνῳ.  
1030 θανόντα γάρ με θάψεθ' οὐ τὸ μόρσιμον,  
δίας πάροιθε παρθένου Παλληνίδος·  
καὶ σοὶ μὲν εὖνους καὶ πόλει σωτήριος  
μέτοικος αἰεὶ κείσομαι κατὰ χθονός,  
τοῖς τῶνδε δ' ἐκγόνοισι πολεμιώτατος,  
ὅταν μόλῳσι δεῦρο σὺν πολλῇ χειρὶ  
χάριν προδόντες τήνδε· τοιούτων ξένων  
προὔσστητε πῶς οὖν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ πεπυσμένος  
δεῦρ' ἦλθον, ἀλλ' οὐ χρησμὸν ἡδούμην<sup>1</sup> θεοῦ;  
1040 "Ἡραν νομίζων θεσφάτων κρείσσω πολύ,  
κούκ ἂν προδοῦναί μ' ἀλλὰ μήτε μοι χοὰς  
μήθ' αἰμ' ἐάσης εἰς ἐμὸν στάξαι τάφον  
κακὸν γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόστον ἀντὶ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ  
δώσω διπλοῦν δὲ κέρδος ἔξετ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ,  
ὕμᾱς τ' ὀνήσω τούσδε τε βλάψω θανῶν

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δῆτα μέλλετ', εἰ πόλει σωτηρίαν  
κατεργάσασθαι τοῖσί τ' ἐξ ὑμῶν χρεῶν,  
κτείνειν τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ', ἀκούοντες τάδε,  
δείκνυσι γὰρ κέλευθον ἀσφαλεστάτην  
ἐχθρὸς μὲν ἀνήρ, ὠφελεῖ δὲ κατθανών

<sup>1</sup> Musgrave for MSS ἡρόμην

## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

This will I lightly teach thee —I will slay,  
Then yield him dead to friends that come for him  
Touching his corpse I will not cheat the state,  
But die he shall, and do me right for wrong

EURYSTHEUS

Slay I ask not thy grace But I bestow  
On Athens, who hath spared, who shamed to  
slay me,  
An ancient oracle of Loxias,  
Which in far days shall bless her more than seems  
Me shall ye bury where 'tis fate-ordained, 1030  
Before the Virgin's shine Pallenian,  
So I, thy friend and Athens' saviour aye,  
A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,  
But to these and their children sternest foe  
What time they march with war-hosts hitherward,  
Traitors to this your kindness —such the guests  
Ye championed! Wherefore then, if this I knew,  
Came I, and feared not the God's oracles?  
Hera, methought, was mightier far than these,  
And would not so forsake me Shed not thou 1040  
Drink-offerings nor blood upon my tomb!  
Ill home-return will I give thy sons' sons  
For this! Of me shall ye have double gain,—  
My death shall be your blessing and their curse

ALCMENA

Why linger then—if so ye must achieve  
Your city's safety and your children's weal—  
To slay this man, who hears this prophecy?  
Himself the path of perfect safety points  
Your foe he is, yet is his death your gain

## ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

1050

κομίζετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες, εἶτα χρὴ κυσὶ  
δοῦναι κτανόντας· μὴ γὰρ ἐλπίσης ὅπως  
αὐθις πατρώας ζῶν ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖς χθονός

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταῦτ' αὖ δοκεῖ μοι. στείχετ', ὄπαδοί.  
τὰ γὰρ ἐξ ἡμῶν  
καθαρῶς ἔσται βασιλεύσιν.



## THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Hence with him, thralls      When ye have slain him,  
then 1050

To dogs 'twere good to cast him      Hope not thou  
To live, and drive me again from fatherland

[*Exeunt* GUARDS *with* EURYSTHEUS

CHORUS

I also consent      On, henchman-train,  
March on with the doomed      No blood-guilt  
stain,

Proceeding of us, on our kings shall remain

[*Exeunt* OMNES



THE  
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS



## ARGUMENT

WHEN Oedipus, king of Thebes, was <sup>\*</sup>ware that he had fulfilled the oracle uttered ere he was born, in that he had slain his father, king Laius, and wedded his mother Jocasta, he plucked out his own eyes in his shame and misery. So he ceased to be king, but, inasmuch as his two sons rendered to him neither love nor worship, he cursed them with this curse, "that they should divide their inheritance with the sword." But they essayed to escape this doom by covenanting to rule in turn, year by year. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polynices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes.

And herein is told how the brothers met in useless parley, by what strange sacrifice Thebes was saved, of the Argives' vain assault, and how the brothers slew each other in single combat.

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JOCASTA, *wife of Oedipus*

OLD SERVANT, *attendant on Antigone*

ANTIGONE, *daughter of Oedipus*

POLYNEICES, *exiled son of Oedipus*

ETEOCLES, *son of Oedipus, and king of Thebes*

CREON, *brother of Jocasta*

TEIRESIAS, *a blind prophet*

MENOECEUS, *son of Creon*

MESSENGER, *armour-bearer of Eteocles*

OEDIPUS, *father of Eteocles and Polynices*

CHORUS, *consisting of Phoenician Maidens, dedicated by the  
Tyrians to the service of Apollo at Delphi, who, resting at  
Thebes on their journey, have been detained there by the  
siege*

*Daughter of Teiresias, guards of Eteocles, attendants of  
Jocasta and of Creon.*

SCENE In front of the Royal Palace at Thebes

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τὴν ἐν ἄστροις οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὁδὸν  
 καὶ χρυσοκολλήτοισιν ἐμβεβὼς δίφροις  
 ὦ Ἥλιε, θοαῖς ἵπποισιν εἰλίσσων φλόγα,  
 ὥς δυστυχῇ Θήβαισι τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρᾳ  
 ἀκτὴν' ἐφήκας, Κάδμος ἡνίκ' ἦλθε γῆν  
 τήνδ', ἐκλιπὼν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα·  
 ὃς παῖδα γήμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ  
 Πολύδωρον ἐξέφυσε, τοῦ δὲ Λάβδακον  
 10 φῦναι λέγουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε Λάϊον,  
 ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κληζομαι Μεινοικέως,  
 Κρέων τ' ἀδελφὸς μητρὸς ἐκ μιᾶς ἔφν·  
 καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με, τοῦτο γὰρ πατὴρ  
 ἔθετο, γαμεῖ δὲ Λαίος μ'· ἐπεὶ δ' ἄπαις  
 ἦν χρόνια λέκτρα τᾶμ' ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν,  
 ἐλθὼν ἐρωτᾷ Φοῖβον ἐξαιτεῖ θ' ἅμα  
 παίδων ἐς οἶκους ἀρσένων κοινωνίαν  
 ὃ δ' εἶπεν ὦ Θήβαισιν εὐλίπποις ἄναξ,  
 μὴ σπείρε τέκνων ἄλοκα δαιμόνων βία·  
 20 εἰ γὰρ τεκνώσεις παῖδ', ἀποκτενεῖ σ' ὁ φύς,  
 καὶ πᾶς σὸς οἶκος βήσεται δι' αἵματος  
 ὃ δ' ἡδονῇ δοὺς εἷς τε βακχεῖον πεσὼν  
 ἔσπειρεν ἡμῖν παῖδα, καὶ σπείρας βρέφος,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Probably corrupt scholars propose φρενός, ἔφνω, ἔφαμ



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

*Enter JOCASTA*

JOCASTA

O THOU who cleav'st thy path mid heaven's stars,  
Who ridest on thy chariot golden-clamped,  
Sun, whirling on with flying steeds thy fire,  
What beams accurst on that day sheddest thou  
O'er Thebes, when Cadmus came to this our land,  
Leaving Phoenicia's sea-fringed realm afar !  
He took to wife Harmonia, Cypris' child,  
And begat Polydore, of whom, men say,  
Sprang Labdacus, and Laurus of him

I, daughter of Menoeceus am I named , 10  
My brother Creon the selfsame mother bare  
Jocasta men call me this name my sire  
Gave ; Laurus wedded me But when long years  
Of wedlock brought no child our halls within,  
He went and questioned Phoebus, craved withal  
For me, for him, male heirs unto his house  
The God spake . " King of chariot-glorious Thebes,  
Beget not seed of sons in Heaven's despite.  
If so thou do, thee shall thine issue slay,  
And all thine house shall wade through seas of  
blood " 20

Yet he, to passion yielding, flushed with wine,  
Begot a son ; and when our babe was born,

- γνούς τὰμπλάκημα τοῦ θεοῦ τε τὴν φάτιν,  
 λειμῶν' ἐς Ἡρας καὶ Κιθαιρώνος λέπας  
 δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθεῖναι βρέφος,  
 σφυρῶν σιδηρὰ κέντρα διαπείρας μέσον  
 ὅθεν νιν Ἑλλὰς ὠνόμαζεν Οἰδίπουν  
 Πολύβου δέ νιν λαβόντες ἵπποβουκόλοι  
 30 φέρουσ' ἐς οἴκους εἷς τε δεσποίνης χέρας  
 ἔθηκαν. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὠδίνων πόνον  
 μαστοῖς ὑφείτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τεκεῖν.  
 ἦδη δὲ πυρσαῖς γένυσιν ἐξανδρούμενος  
 παῖς οὐμός, ἡ γνούς ἢ τινος μαθὼν πάρα,  
 ἔστειχε τοὺς φύσαντας ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων  
 πρὸς δῶμα Φοίβου, Δαίός θ', οὐμὸς πόσις,  
 τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παῖδα μαστεύων μαθεῖν,  
 εἰ μηκέτ' εἴη. καὶ ξυνάπττετον πόδα  
 εἰς ταῦτόν ἄμφω Φωκίδος σχιστῆς ὁδοῦ  
 40 καὶ νιν κελεύει Λαίου τροχηλάτης  
 ὦ ξένε, τυράννοις ἐκποδὼν μεθίστασο  
 ὃ δ' εἰρπ' ἀναυδος, μέγα φρονῶν πῶλοι δέ νιν  
 χηλαῖς τένοντας ἐξεφοίνισσον ποδῶν.  
 ὅθεν—τί τὰκτὸς τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν,—  
 παῖς πατέρα καίνει καὶ λαβὼν ὀχήματα  
 Πολύβῳ τροφεῖ δίδωσιν ὥς δ' ἐπεζάρει  
 Σφίγξ ἀρπαγαῖσι πόλιν, ἐμὸς τ' οὐκ ἦν πόσις,  
 Κρέων ἀδελφὸς τὰμὰ κηρύσσει λέχη,  
 ὅστις σοφῆς αἴνιγμα παρθένου μάθοι,  
 50 τούτῳ ξυνάψειν λέκτρα. τυγχάνει δέ πως  
 μούσας ἐμὸς παῖς Οἰδίπους Σφίγγος μαθὼν,  
 ὅθεν τύραννος τῆσδε γῆς καθίσταται  
 καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἔπαθλα τῆσδε λαμβάνει χθονός,  
 γαμεί δὲ τὴν τεκοῦσαν οὐκ εἰδὼς τάλας  
 οὐδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα παιδὶ συγκοιμωμένη.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Ware of his sin, remembering the God's word,  
He gave the babe to herdmen to cast forth  
In Hera's Mead upon Cithaeron's ridge,  
His ankles pierced clear through with iron spikes,  
Whence Hellas named him *Swell-foot*—Oedipus

But Polybus' horse-tenders found him there,  
And bare him home, and in their mistiess' hands  
Laid To my travail's fruit she gave her breast, 30  
Telling her lord herself had borne the babe  
Now, grown to man with golden-bearded cheeks,  
My son, divining, or of some one told,  
Journeyed, resolved to find his parents forth,  
To Phoebus' fane Now Laius my lord,  
Seeking assurance of the babe exposed,  
If dead he were, fared thither And they met,  
These twain, where parts the highway Phocis-ward  
Then Laius' charioteer commanded him—  
"Stand clear, man, from the pathway of a prince!" 40  
Proudly he strode on, answering not The steeds  
Spurned with their hoofs his ankles, drawing blood

Then—why tell aught beyond the sad event?—  
Son slayeth father, takes the car, and gives  
To Polybus, his fosterer While the Sphinx  
Was ravaging Thebes, when now my lord was not,  
Creon my brother published that the man,  
Whoso should read the riddle of that witch-maid,  
Even he should wed me Strangely it befell—  
Oedipus, my son, read the Sphinx's song, 50,  
Whence he became the ruler of this land  
Yea, for his guerdon wins the throne of Thebes,  
And weds his mother,—wretch!—unwitting he,  
Unwitting she that she was her son's bride

τίκτω δὲ παῖδας παιδὶ δύο μὲν ἄρσενας,  
 Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινὴν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν,  
 κόρας δὲ δισσάς· τὴν μὲν Ἴσμήνην πατὴρ  
 ὠνόμασε, τὴν δὲ πρόσθεν Ἀντιγόνην ἐγώ.  
 μαθὼν δὲ τὰ μὰ λέκτρα μητρῶν γάμων  
 60 ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα  
 εἰς ὄμμαθ' αὐτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον,  
 χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν αἰμάξας κόρας.

ἐπεὶ δὲ τέκνων γένυς ἐμῶν σκιάζεται,  
 κλήθροισ ἐκρυψαν πατέρ', ἵν' ἀμνήμων τύχη  
 γένοιτο πολλῶν δεομένη σοφισμάτων.  
 ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις. πρὸς δὲ τῆς τύχης νοσῶν  
 ἀρὰς ἀρᾶται παισὶν ἀνοσιωτάτας,  
 θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε  
 τὼ δ' εἰς φόβον πεσόντε, μὴ τελεσφόρους  
 70 εὐχὰς θεοὶ κραίνωσιν οἰκούντων ὁμοῦ,  
 ξυμβάντ' ἔταξαν τὸν νεώτερον πάρος  
 φεύγειν ἐκόντα τήνδε Πολυνείκην χθόνα,  
 Ἐτεοκλέα δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἔχειν μένοντα γῆς  
 ἐνιαυτὸν ἀλλάσσουντ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς  
 καθέζετ' ἀρχῆς, οὐ μεθίσταται θρόνων,  
 φυγάδα δ' ἀπωθεῖ τῆσδε Πολυνείκῃ χθονός.

ὁ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβὼν,  
 πολλὴν ἀθροίσας ἀσπίδ' Ἀργείων ἄγει  
 ἐπ' αὐτὰ δ' ἐλθὼν ἐπτάπυλα τείχῃ τάδε,  
 80 πατρὶ ἀπαιτεῖ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός.  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔριν λύουσ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν  
 ἔπεισα παιδὶ παῖδα πρὶν ψαῦσαι δορός.  
 ἦξιεν δ' ὁ πεμφθείς φησιν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος.  
 ἀλλ' ὦ φαεννὰς οὐρμινού ναίων πτυχὰς  
 Ζεῦ, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοις.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And children to my son I bare, two sons,  
Eteocles and famed Polyneices' might,  
And daughters twain the one the father named  
Ismene, the elder I, Antigone  
But, when he knew me mother both and wife,  
Oedipus, crushed 'neath utterest sufferings, 60  
On his own eyes wrought ruin horrible,  
Yea, with gold brooch-pin dienced then orbs with  
blood.

Now, being to bearded manhood grown, my sons  
Close-warded kept then sire, that his dark fate,  
By manifold shifts scarce veiled, might be forgot  
Within he lives, but, by his fate distraught,  
A curse most impious hurled he at his sons,  
*That they may share their heritage with the sword.*  
They, terror-stricken lest, if they should dwell  
Together, Gods might bring the curse to pass, 70  
Made covenant that Polyneices first,  
The younger, self-exiled, should leave the land,  
That Eteocles tarrying wear the crown  
One year—then change But, once in sovereignty  
Firm-seated, he would step not from the throne,  
And thrust Polyneices banished forth the land

To Argos fares he, weds Adrastus' child,  
And bringeth huge war-muster of Argive shields  
To our very walls seven-gated hath he come,  
Claiming his father's sceptre and his right 80  
And I, to allay their strife, persuaded son  
In truce to meet son, ere they touch the spear  
And, saith the messenger I sent, he comes  
O dweller Zeus in heaven's veiling light,  
Save us, giant reconciling to my sons!

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

χρή δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας, οὐκ ἂν βροτὸν  
τὸν αὐτὸν αἰεὶ δυστυχῇ καθεστάναι.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

90 ὦ κλεινὸν οἴκοις Ἀντιγόνη θάλος πατρί,  
ἐπεὶ σε μήτηρ παρθενῶνας ἐκλιπεῖν  
μεθῆκε μελάθρων ἐς διήρες ἔσχατον  
στράτευμ' ἰδεῖν Ἀργεῖον ἱκεσίαισι σαῖς,  
ἐπίσχες, ὥς ἂν προὔξερυνήσω στίβον,  
μή τις πολιτῶν ἐν τρίβῳ φαντάζεται,  
καμοὶ μὲν ἔλθῃ φαῦλος ὥς δούλῳ ψόγος,  
σοὶ δ' ὥς ἀνάσσει· πάντα δ' ἐξειδὼς φράσω  
ἅ τ' εἶδον εἰσήκουσά τ' Ἀργείων πάρα,  
σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σὺ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων  
ἐνθένδ' ἐκεῖσε δεῦρό τ' αὖ κείνου πάρα.  
100 ἀλλ' οὔτις ἀστῶν τοῖσδε χρίμπτεται δόμοις,  
κέδρου παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί·  
σκοπεῖ δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' Ἴσμηνοῦ ῥοὰς  
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα, πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὅσον.

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὄρεγέ νυν ὄρεγε γεραιὰν νέαν  
χεῖρ', ἀπὸ κλιμάκων ποδὸς  
ἵχνος ἐπαντέλλων.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰδοὺ ξύναψον, παρθέν' εἰς καιρὸν δ' ἔβης·  
κινούμενον γὰρ τυγχάνει Πελασγικὸν  
στράτευμα, χωρίζουσι δ' ἀλλήλων λόχους.

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

110 ἰὼ πότνια παῖ Λατοῦς  
Ἑκάτα, κατάχαλκον ἅπαν  
πεδίου ἀστράπτει.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thou oughtest not, so thou be wise, to leave  
The same man evermoie to be unblest [Exit

*Enter, above, OLD SERVANT and ANTIGONE*

OLD SERVANT

Fair flower of thy sire's house, Antigone,  
Albert thy mother suffered thee to leave  
Thy maiden-bower at thine entreaty, and mount 90  
The palace-roof to view the Aigive host,  
Yet stay, that I may scan the highway first,  
Lest on the path some citizen appeal,  
And scandal light—for me, the thial, 'twere naught,—  
On thee, the princess This known, will I tell  
All that I saw, and heard from Argive men,  
When, to thy brother on truce-mission sent,  
I passed hence thither, and then back from him  
Nay, not a citizen draws nigh the halls  
Climb with thy feet the ancient cedar-stair, 100  
Gaze o'er the plain, along Ismenus' stream  
And Dirce's flow, on yon great host of foes

ANTIGONE

Stretch it forth, stretch it forth, the old man's hand,  
unto me  
The child, from the stair, and my feet upbear,  
As upward I strain.

OLD SERVANT

Lo, maiden, grasp it in good time thou com'st,  
For yon Pelasgian host is moving now,  
Battalion from battalion sundering

ANTIGONE

O Queen, O Child of Latona, Hecate !  
Lo, how the glare of the brass flashes there 110  
Over all the plain !

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐ γάρ τι φαύλως ἦλθε Πολυνείκης χθόνα,  
πολλοῖς μὲν ἵπποις, μυρίοις δ' ὄπλοις βρέμων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄρα πύλαι κλήθροισι χαλκόδετ' ἄρ' ἔμβολα  
λαινέοισιν Ἀμφίονος ὀργάνοις  
τείχεος ἤρμοσται ,

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θάρσει· τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις  
ἄλλ' εἰσόρα τὸν πρῶτον, εἰ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

120 τίς οὗτος ὁ λευκολόφας,  
πρόπαρ δς ἀγείται στρατοῦ  
πάγχαλκον ἀσπίδ' ἀμφὶ βρα-  
χίονι κουφίζων ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

λοχαγός, ὦ δέσποινα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς πόθεν γεγώς ,  
αὔδασον, ὦ γεραιέ, τίς ὀνομάζεται ,

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὗτος Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὐδᾶται γένος,  
Λερναῖα δ' οἰκεῖ νάμαθ', Ἴππομέδων ἀναξ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

130 ἐ ἐ ὥς γαῦρος, ὥς φοβερὸς εἰσιδεῖν,  
γίγαντι γηγενέτα προσόμοιος  
ἀστερωπὸς ἐν γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ πρόσφορος  
ἀμερίῳ γέννα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸν δ' ἑξαμείβοντ' οὐχ ὀρᾷς Δίρκης ὕδωρ ;



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

Ay, for not feebly Polyneices comes  
With thunder of many a steed, with countless shields

ANTIGONE

Ah, be the gates secure, be the brass-clamped bolts  
made sure  
In the walls that Amphion in days bygone  
Fashioned of stone ?

OLD SERVANT

Fear not, the city wards all safe within [him  
Mark yonder foremost chief, if thou wouldst know

ANTIGONE

Who is he with the white helm-crest  
Who marcheth in front of their war- array, 120  
And a brazen buckle fencing his breast  
Lightly his arm doth sway ?

OLD SERVANT

A captain, princess

ANTIGONE

What his land, his birth ?  
Make answer, ancient What name beareth he ?

OLD SERVANT

Yon chief proclaims him Mycenaean-born :  
By streams of Lerna King Hippomedon dwells

ANTIGONE

Ah me, how haughty, how fearful he is to see,  
Like to a Giant, a child of Earth !  
Star-blazonry gleams on his shield not like is he  
Unto one of mortal birth 130

OLD SERVANT

See'st thou not him who crosseth Duce's flood ?

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλλος ἄλλος ὃδε τευχέων τρόπος  
τίς δ' ἐστὶν οὗτος ,

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παῖς μὲν Οἰνέως ἔφν  
Τυδεύς, Ἄρη δ' Αἰτωλὸν ἐν στέρνοις ἔχει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος ὁ τᾶς Πολυνείκεος, ὦ γέρον,  
αὐτοκασιγνήτας νύμφας  
ὁμόγαμος κυρεῖ ,  
ὡς ἀλλόχρως ὅπλοισι μιξοβάρβαρος

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

140 σακεσφόροι γὰρ πάντες Αἰτωλοί, τέκνον,  
λόγχαις τ' ἀκοντιστήρες εὐστοχώτατοι.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ', ὦ γέρον, πῶς αἰσθάνει σαφῶς τάδε ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σημεῖ' ἰδὼν τότ' ἀσπίδων ἐγνώρισα,  
σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων·  
ἂ προσδεδορκῶς οἶδα τοὺς ὠπλισμένους

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς δ' οὗτος ἀμφὶ μνήμα τὸ Ζήθου περᾶ  
καταβόστρυχος, ὄμμασι γοργὸς εἰς-  
ιδεῖν νεανίας,  
λοχαγός, ὡς ὄχλος νιν ὑστέρφ ποδὶ  
πάνοπλος ἀμφέπει ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

150 ὃδ' ἐστὶ Παρθενοπαῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλὰ νιν ἂ κατ' ὄρη μετὰ ματέρος  
Ἄρτεμις ἱεμένα τόξοις δαμάσας' ὀλέσειεν,  
ὃς ἐπ' ἐμὰν πόλιν ἔβα πέρσων

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Of other, of stranger fashion his armour shows !  
Who is he ?

OLD SERVANT

Tydeus he, of Oeneus' blood  
Aetolia's battle-fire in the breast of him glows

ANTIGONE

Is this he, ancient, by spousal-ties  
Unto mine own Polyneices allied,  
Whose wife's fair sister he won for his bride ?  
How half-barbaric his harness, of no Greek guise ?

OLD SERVANT

Nay, child, shield-bearers all Aetolians are,  
And most unerring huileis of the lance 140

ANTIGONE

And thou, how know'st thou, ancient, all so well ?

OLD SERVANT

Even then I noted their shield-blazonry,  
When to thy brother with truce-pact I faied  
I marked them, and I know then beaers well

ANTIGONE

Who is this by Zethus' sepulchre going, [flowing ?  
With the keen, stern eyes and the curls long-  
A warrior young,  
Yet a chief—for in armour brazen-glowing  
See his followers throng !

OLD SERVANT

Parthenopaeus, Atalanta's son 150

ANTIGONE

Now may Artemis, over the mountains hasting  
With his mother, smite with her bow, and in death  
lay yon man low,  
Who is hitherward come for my city's wasting !

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἴη τάδ', ὦ παῖ σὺν δίκη δ' ἤκουσι γῆν,  
ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ σκοπῶσ' ὀρθῶς θεοί

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ δ' ὃς ἐμοὶ μιᾶς ἐγένετ' ἐκ ματρὸς  
πολυπόνῳ μοίρᾳ ,  
ὦ φίλτατ', εἰπέ, ποῦ 'στι Πολυνείκης, γέρον

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

160 ἐκεῖνος ἐπτά παρθένων τάφου πέλας  
Νιόβης Ἀδράστῳ πλησίον παραστατεῖ  
ὀρᾶς ,

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὀρῶ δῆτ' οὐ σαφῶς, ὀρῶ δέ πως  
μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ' ἐξηκασμένα  
ἀνεμώκεος εἴθε δρόμον νεφέλας  
ποσὶν ἐξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος  
πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα, περὶ δ' ὠλένας  
δέρα φιλτάτα βάλοιμι χρόνῳ  
φυγάδα μέλεον ὥς  
ὅπλοισι χρυσέοισιν ἐκπρεπῆς, γέρον,  
ἐφ' οἷς ὅμοια φλεγέθων βολαῖς ἀλίου

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

170 ἥξει δόμους τούσδ', ὥστε σ' ἐμπλήσαι χαρᾶς,  
ἔνσπονδος.

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος δ', ὦ γεραιέ, τίς κυρεῖ,  
ὃς ἄρμα λευκὸν ἡνιοστροφεῖ βεβῶς ,

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, ὃ δέσποιν', ὃδε  
σφάγια δ' ἅμ' αὐτῷ, γῆς φιλαίματοι ῥοαί

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

So be it, child yet for the right they come,  
Wherefore I dread lest God defend the right

ANTIGONE

And where is he whom the selfsame mother bore  
With me, to a doom of travail sore?  
Dear ancient, where is Polyneices, tell.

OLD SERVANT

He standeth near Adrastus, near the tomb  
Of Niobe's unwedded daughters seven. 160  
See'st thou?

ANTIGONE

I see—not clearly—yet, half-guessed,  
Discern the outline of his frame and chest  
O that as wind-driven clouds swift-racing  
I might speed with my feet through the air,  
and light [embracing  
By my brother, mine own, and with arms  
Might hold but his dear neck close-enfolden—  
So long an exile in dolorous plight!  
Lo, how he flasheth in armour golden,  
Like the morning shafts of the sun bright-  
blazing!

OLD SERVANT

Hither with joy to fill thee shall he come 170  
By truce

ANTIGONE

But yon chief, ancient, who is he,  
Car-borne, who sways the reins of horses white?

OLD SERVANT

The prophet Amphiaraus, Lady, is this  
With him are victims, Earth's blood-offerings

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

180

ὦ λιπαροζώνου θύγατερ Ἀελίου  
Σελαναία, χρυσεόκυκλον φέγγος,  
ὡς ἀτρεμαῖα κέντρα καὶ σώφρονα  
πώλοις μεταφέρων ἰθύνει  
ποῦ δ' ὅς τὰ δεινὰ τῇδ' ἐφουβρίζει πόλει  
Καπανεύς ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἐκείνος προσβάσεις τεκμαίρεται  
πύργων ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω τείχη μετρῶν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

190

ἰώ,  
Νέμεσι καὶ Διὸς βαρύβρομοι βρονταί,  
κεραυνῶν τε φῶς αἰθαλόεν, σύ τοι  
μεγαλαγορίαν ὑπεράνορα κοιμίζεις  
ὃδ' ἐστίν, αἰχμαλωτίδας  
ὃς δορὶ Θηβαίας Μυκηνησίην  
Λερναίᾳ τε δώσειν τριαίνα,  
Ποσειδανίοις Ἀμυμωνίοις  
ὔδασι, δουλείαν περιβαλὼν, [λέγει] ,  
μήποτε μήποτε τάνδ', ὦ πότνια,  
χρυσεοβόστρυχον ὦ Διὸς ἔρνος  
Ἄρτεμι, δουλοσύναν τλαίην.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, εἴσβα δῶμα καὶ κατὰ στέγας  
ἐν παρθενῶσι μίμνε σοῖς, ἐπεὶ πόθου  
εἰς τέρψιν ἦλθες ὧν ἔχρηξες εἰσιδεῖν  
ὄχλος γάρ, ὡς ταραγμὸς εἰσῆλθεν πόλιν,  
χωρεῖ γυναικῶν πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς·  
φιλόψογον δὲ χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφυ,  
σμικρὰς τ' ἀφορμὰς ἣν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

### ANTIGONE

O Child of the Sun-god, the Lord of the radiant zone,  
O Moon, thou golden-rounded gleam,  
How calmly, how soberly ever he driveth on,  
One after other goading his team!  
And where is Capaneus—he who hurls at Thebes 180  
Insult of threats?

### OLD SERVANT

There —he counts up and down  
The wall-stones, gauging our towers' scaling-height

### ANTIGONE

O Nemesis, O ye thunders rolling deep  
Of Zeus, thou flaming light of his levin,  
Overweening vaunts dost thou hush into endless  
sleep!  
And is this the hero by whom shall be given  
Into bondage to dames of Mycenae the spear-won  
daughters [waters  
Of Thebes,—to the Trident of Læina, the fountain-  
Amymonian, at stroke of Poseidon that leapt,—  
When his net of thraldom around them is swept?  
Never, ah never, O Artemis Queen, 190  
Zeus' child, with the tresses of golden sheen,  
Bowed under bondage may I be seen!

### OLD SERVANT

Daughter, pass in, and 'neath the roofs abide  
Thy maiden bowers within, for thy desire  
Hast thou attained, even all thou fain wouldst see  
Lo, to the royal halls a woman-throng  
Comes, now confusion through the town hath passed  
And scandal-loving still is womankind,  
For, so they find slight cause for idle talk,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

200 πλείους ἐπεισφέρουσιν ἡδονὴν δέ τις  
γυναιξὶ μηδὲν ὑγιὲς ἀλλήλας λέγειν

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

Τύριον οἶδμα λιποῦσ' ἔβαν  
ἀκροθίνια Λοξία  
Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου  
Φοίβῳ δούλα μελάθρων,  
ἔν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις  
Παρνασοῦ κατενάσθη,  
Ἴόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἐλά-  
τα πλεύσασα περιρρύτων  
210 ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων  
Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς  
ἱππεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῷ  
κάλλιστον κελάδημα

στρ. α'

πόλεος ἐκπροκριθεῖσ' ἐμᾶς  
καλλιστεύματα Λοξία  
Καδμείων ἔμολον γᾶν,  
κλεινῶν Ἀγηνοριδᾶν  
ὁμογενεῖς ἐπὶ Λαίου  
πεμφθεῖσ' ἐνθάδε πύργους  
220 ἴσα δ' ἀγάλμασι χρυσοτεύ-  
κτοις Φοίβῳ γενόμεαν λάτρεις  
ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ  
περιμένει με κόμας ἐμᾶς  
δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδὰν  
Φοιβεΐαισι λατρεῖαις

ἀντ α

ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς  
δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων  
Βακχείων Διονύσου,

μεσφδ.



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

More they invent    Strange pleasure women take    200  
To speak of sister-women nothing good

[*Exeunt* OLD SERVANT *and* ANTIGONE

*Enter* CHORUS

(*Sti* 1)

Afar from the tides against Tyre's walls swelling,  
For Loxias chosen an offering,  
From the Isle of Phoenicia I came, to be thrall  
Unto Phoebus, to serve in his palace-hall,  
Where 'neath crags of Parnassus, with airy fall  
Of the snow oversprent, he hath made him a dwelling  
O'er Ionian seas did it waft me, the wing  
Of the oar, while the West-wind's chariot sped  
Over the furrows unharvested    210  
That from Sicily roughened,—before him fled  
Music, till all the heavens were telling  
The glory of beauty his breathings bring

The choice of my city's virgin-flowers,    (*Ant* 1)  
A gift of beauty to Loxias made,  
To the land of the children of Cadmus we came,  
To the sons of Agenor of ancient fame,  
Hither brought to a people by lineage the same  
With my fathers, even to Laus' towers  
But as gold-wrought statues to stand arrayed    220  
For the service of Phoebus appointed we were,  
And Castaly's fount yet waiteth us there,  
That my maiden glory of shining hair  
May be oversprayed by its hallowing showers,  
Ere for Phoebus's service its tresses I braid

Hail, rock that flashest a splendour of light (*Mesode*)  
From the cloven tongue of thy flame o'er the height  
Of the Bacchic peak Dionysus haunteth !

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

230 οἶνα θ', ἃ καθαμέριον  
 στάξεις τὸν πολύκαρπον  
 οἰνάνθας ἰεῖσα βότρυν,  
 ζάθεά τ' ἄντρα δράκοντος οὐ-  
 ρεαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεῶν  
 νιφόβολόν τ' ὄρος ἱερόν, εἰ-  
 λίσσων ἀθανάτας θεοῦ  
 χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος  
 παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-  
 βου Δίρκαν προλιπούσα.

240 νῦν δέ μοι πρὸ τειχέων  
 θούριος μολὼν Ἄρης  
 αἶμα δάιον φλέγει  
 τᾶδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι, πόλει·  
 κοινὰ γὰρ φίλων ἄχῃ  
 κοινὰ δ', εἴ τι πείσεται  
 καλλίπυργος ἄδε γὰ  
 Φοινίσσα χώρα φεῦ φεῦ  
 κοινὸν αἶμα, κοινὰ τέκεα  
 τᾶς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν Ἰοῦς·  
 ὧν μέτεστί μοι πόνων

στρ β'

250 ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλιν νέφος  
 ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει  
 σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,  
 ἂν Ἄρης τάχ' εἴσεται  
 παισὶν Οἰδίπου φέρων  
 πημονὰν Ἑρινύων  
 Ἄργος ὧ Πελασγικόν,

ἀντ. β'

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Hail, vine that with each morn offerest up  
Thy giant cluster to brim the cup 230  
That never the mystic ritual wanteth!<sup>1</sup>  
Hail, cavern revered where the Dragon abode!  
Hail, watchtower scan of the Archer-god!  
Hail, snow-smitten ridges by mortal untrod!  
O that the wreaths of the dance I were weaving,  
With soul unafraid, to the Goddess undying,  
These fear-stricken waters of Duce leaving  
For Apollo's dells by the world's heart lying!

But this day before the wall (Stn 2)  
Furious Ares comes, his hand 240  
Lights for Thebes the slaughter-brand—  
God forfend his will befall!  
Friend with friend is one in pain,  
And Phoenicia with all bane  
Of the stately-towered land  
Shall condole, a mourning nation  
One our lineage, one our blood,  
All be hoinèd Io's brood  
Mine is all your tribulation

Round the town a shield-array (Ant 2) 250  
Cloudlike flashes levin-light—  
Grim presentment of red fight!  
Yet shall Ares rue the day  
If the Avengers' curse he bring  
On the sons of that blind king  
Argos, thy Pelasgian might

<sup>1</sup> In the temple of Dionysus on Parnassus was a vine yielding one ripe cluster daily, to furnish the libation for the God

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

260 δειμαίνω τὰν σὰν ἀλκὰν  
καὶ τὸ θεόθεν οὐ γὰρ ἄδικον  
εἰς ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἔνοπλος ὀρμᾶ  
παῖς μετέρχεται δόμους

## ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰ μὲν πυλωρῶν κληῖθρά μ' εἰσεδέξατο  
δι' εὐπετείας τειχέων εἴσω μολεῖν  
ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ με δικτύων ἔσω  
λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ' ἀναίμακτον χροά  
ων εἶνεκ' ὄμμα πανταχῇ διωιστέον  
κάκεισε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο, μὴ δόλος τις ἦ  
ὥπλισμένος δὲ χεῖρα τῷδε φασγάνῳ  
τὰ πίστ' ἐμαντῶ τοῦ θράσους παρέξομαι  
ὦ ἢ τίς οὗτος, ἢ κτύπον φοβούμεθα;  
270 ἅπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,  
ὅταν δι' ἐχθρᾶς ποὺς ἀμείβηται χθονός.  
πέποιθα μέντοι μητρί, κοῦ πέποιθ' ἄμα,  
ἥ τις μ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν  
ἀλλ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκή βῶμιοι γὰρ ἐσχάροι  
πέλας πάρεισι, κοῦκ ἔρημα δώματα  
φέρ' ἐς σκοτεινὰς περιβολὰς μεθῶ ξίφος  
καὶ τάσδ' ἔρωμαι, τίνες ἐφειστᾶσιν δόμοις  
ξένοι γυναῖκες, εἴπατ', ἐκ ποίας πάτρας  
Ἑλληνικοῖσι δώμασιν πελάζετε,

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

280 Φοίνισσα μὲν γῇ πατρίς ἡ θρέψασά με,  
'Αγήνορος δὲ παῖδες ἐκ παίδων δορὸς  
Φοῖβῳ μ' ἔπεμψαν ἐνθάδ' ἀκροθίνιον  
μέλλων δὲ πέμπειν μ' Οἰδίπου κλεινὸς γόνος  
μαντεῖα σεμνὰ Λοξίου τ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρας,  
ἐν τῷδ' ἐπεστράτευσαν Ἀργεῖοι πόλιν.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dread I, and the hand of Heaven !  
For the strife of him who comes  
Mail-clad to the ancient homes  
Will with Justice' help be stiven 260

*Enter* POLYNEICES

POLYNEICES

Lightly, too lightly, have the warders' bolts  
Made way for me to pass within the walls  
Wherefore I fear lest, once within their net,  
They shall not let me 'scape but with my blood  
Needs must I then turn every way mine eye  
Hither and thither, lest some treachery lurk  
Mine hand with this blade aimed shall give to me  
The assurance of a desperate courage born  
Ha ! who goes there ?—or fear I but a sound ?  
All perilous seems to them that venture all, 270  
Soon as their feet are set on hostile soil  
Yet do I trust my mother—and mistrust,—  
Who drew me to come hither under truce  
But help is nigh, for lo, the altar-hearth  
At hand, nor void the palace is of folk.  
Into its dark sheath let me plunge my sword,  
And ask these by the palace who they be.  
Ye alien women, say, from what far land  
Unto the homes of Hellas are ye come ?

CHORUS

Phoenician was the land that fostered me 280  
Agenor's sons' sons sent me hitherward  
To Phoebus, firstfruits of their battle-spoil  
When Oedipus' famed son would speed me on  
To Loxias' awful oracle and hearths,  
Even then the Argives marched against the town.

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σὺ δ' ἀντάμειψαί μ', ὅστις ὦν ἐλήλυθας  
ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Θηβαίας πόλεως

## ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πατὴρ μὲν ἡμῖν Οἰδίπους ὁ Λαίου,  
ἔτικτε δ' Ἰοκάστη με, παῖς Μενοικέως·  
καλεῖ δὲ Πολυνείκη με Θηβαῖος λεώς

290

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ συγγένεια τῶν Ἀγήνορος τέκνων,  
ἐμῶν τυράννων, ὦν ἀπεστάλην ὑπο—  
γονυπετεῖς ἔδρας προσπίτνω σ', ἄναξ,  
τὸν οἴκοθεν νόμον σέβουσα—  
ἔβας ὦ χρόνῳ γὰρ πατρώαν  
ἰὼ ἰώ πότνια, μόλε πρόδομος,  
ἀμπέτασον πύλας.

κλύεις, ὦ τεκοῦσα τόνδε μᾶτερ,  
τί μέλλεις ὑπώροφα μέλαθρα περᾶν,  
θιγεῖν τ' ὠλέναις τέκνου;

300

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

Φοίνισσαν βοᾶν  
κλύουσ', ὦ νεάνιδες, γηραιὸν  
πόδ' ἔλκω, τρομερὰν βάσιν.<sup>1</sup>

ἰὼ τέκνον,  
χρόνῳ σὸν ὄμμα μῦρίαις ἐν ἡμέραις  
προσεῖδον· ἀμφίβαλλε μα-  
στὸν ὠλέναισι ματέρος,

<sup>1</sup> Murray · for MSS γεραιῶ ποδὶ τρομερὰν ἔλκω (παιδί) ποδὸς  
βάσιν

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But thou, make answer, who art thou that com'st  
Into this fortress of seven-gated Thebes ?

### POLYNEICES

Oedipus, son of Larus, was my sire,  
Menoeceus' child Jocasta gave me birth,  
And me the Theban folk Polyneices name

290

### CHORUS

O kinsmen thou of old Agenoi's race,  
My rulers, who forth sent me to this place !—  
Low on my knees in obeisance I fall,  
After the wont of my people, O king !—  
Thou art come at the last, to the land of thy fathers  
comest thou !  
What ho, Queen, ho ! fare forth of the hall !  
Wide let the palace-portals swing  
Mother that barest him, hear'st thou my call ?  
Why dost thou linger to pass from thine high-roofed  
bowels now,  
And around thy son with thine arms to cling ? 300

*Enter* JOCASTA

### JOCASTA

You Tyrian accents ringing clear  
Smote, O ye maidens, on mine ear, [near  
And lo, my tottering feet, for old slow-trailed, draw  
*Catches sight of* POLYNEICES

O my son, I behold  
Thy face at the last,  
After days untold,  
O my son !—now cast  
Thine arms round thy mother, and bosom to bosom  
enfold me fast

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

παρηίδων τ' ὄρεγμα βο-  
στρύχων τε κυανόχρωτα χαί-  
τας πλόκαμον, σκιάζων δέραν ἁμάν

310 ἰὼ ἰώ, μόλις φανείς  
ἄελπτα κἀδόκητα ματρὸς ὠλέναις  
τί φῶ σε, πῶς ἅπαντα  
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισι  
πολυέλικτον ἄδονᾶν  
ἐκείσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο  
περιχορεύουσα τέρψιν παλαιᾶν λάβω  
χαρμονᾶν; ἰὼ τέκος,  
ἔρημον πατρῶον ἔλιπες δόμον  
φυγὰς ἀποσταλεις ὁμαίμου λώβα,  
320 ἧ ποθεινὸς φίλοις,  
ἧ ποθεινὸς Θήβαις

ὄθεν ἑμάν τε λευκόχροα κείρομαι  
δακρυόεσσ' ἀνεῖσα πένθει κόμαν,  
ἄπεπλος φαρέων λευκῶν, τέκνον,  
δυσόρφναια δ' ἄμφι τρύχη τάδε  
σκότι' ἀμείβομαι

ὁ δ' ἐν δόμοισι πρέσβυς ὀμματοστερῆς  
ἀπήνας ὁμοπτέρου τᾶς ἀπο-  
ζυγείσας δόμων  
330 πόθον ἀμφιδάκρυτον αἰὲ κατέχων



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Stoop to me, stoop,  
Deaf face, from above !  
Let the dark head droop  
The tresses thereof,  
Overshadowing my neck with its clustering curls,  
with the banner of love  
Hopes, dreams, they were past 310  
As a tale that is told ,  
Yet thou comest at last  
For mine arms to enfold !  
What shall I say to thee ?—how shall I grasp it, the  
rapture of old ?  
By assurance of word,  
Or by hands that embrace,  
Or by feet that are stilled,  
Or by body that sways,  
Hitherward, thitherward, tossed as the dance inter-  
twineth its maze ?

Ah son, thy father's desolate home forsaking,  
Wast thou by thine own brother's tyrannous wrong  
Exiled !—for thee thy lovers' hearts were aching, 320  
Thebes' heart for thee ached long

Therefore my white hair have I shorn for mourning,  
With weeping let it fall for thee, my son  
Of white robes disarrayed, for all adorning  
These night-hued rags I don ;

While in our halls the sightless ancient, ever  
Yearning and weeping o'er that noble twain  
Whom from home's yoke of love did hatred sever,  
Rushed, eager to be slain 330

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀνῆξε μὲν ξίφους  
ἐπ' αὐτόχειρά τε σφαγάν, •  
ὑπὲρ τέραμνά τ' ἀγχόνας,  
στενάζων ἄρα's τέκνοισ'  
σὺν ἀλαλαῖσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων  
σκότια κρύπτεται

340 σέ δ', ὦ τέκνον, καὶ γάμοισι δὴ  
κλύω ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἄδονα  
ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν  
ξένον τε κῆδος ἀμφέπειν,  
ἅλαστα ματρὶ τᾶδε Λα-  
ίῳ τε τῷ παλαιγενεῖ,  
γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν  
ἐγὼ δ' οὔτε σοι πυρὸς ἀνῆψα φῶς  
νόμιμον ἐν γάμοις  
[ὥς πρέπει] ματέρι μακαρία  
ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη  
λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίαν  
πόλιν ἐσυγάθη σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.

350 ὅλοιτο τάδ', εἴτε σίδαρος  
εἴτ' ἔρις εἴτε πατὴρ ὁ σὸς αἷτιος,  
εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε  
δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα·  
πρὸς ἐμὲ γὰρ κακῶν ἔμολε τῶνδ' ἄχρη

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινὸν γυναιξὶν αἰ δι' ὠδίνων γοναί,  
καὶ φιλότεκνόν πως πᾶν γυναικείον γένος.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

By his own hand, with sword, with noose down-trailing  
From rafters dim,—now groaning o'er the doom  
His mansion brought on you, and ever wailing  
With anguish, hides in gloom

But thou, my son, men say, hast made affiance  
With strangers · children gotten in thine halls  
Gladden thee, yea, thou soughtest strange alliance ! 340  
Son, on thy mother falls

Thine alien bridal curse to haunt her ever  
Thee shall a voice from Laius' grave accuse  
The spousal torch for thee I kindled never,  
As happy mothers use ,

Nor for thy bridal did Ismenus bring thee  
Joy of the bath ; nor at the entering-in  
Of this thy bride did Theban maidens sing thee  
A curse be on that sin,

Whether from spell of steel born,<sup>1</sup> from thy father, 350  
Or lust of strife, or whether level rose  
Of demons in yon halls !—on mine head gather  
All tortures of these woes

### CHORUS

Mighty with women is then travail's fruit,  
Yea, dear the child is to all womankind

<sup>1</sup> "The spell of the steel itself draws men on to fight"—

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

360 μῆτερ, φρονῶν εὖ κοῦ φρονῶν ἀφικόμην  
 ἐχθροὺς ἐς ἄνδρας ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει  
 πατρίδος ἔρᾶν ἅπαντας ὃς δ' ἄλλως λέγει,  
 λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκεῖσ' ἔχει.  
 οὕτω δὲ τάρβους εἰς φόβον τ' ἀφικόμην,  
 μή τις δόλος με πρὸς κασιγνήτου κτάνη,  
 ὥστε ξιφήρη χεῖρ' ἔχων δι' ἄστεως  
 κυκλῶν πρόσωπον ἦλθον ἐν δέ μ' ὤφελει,  
 σπουδαί τε καὶ σὴ πίστις, ἥ μ' ἐσήγαγε  
 τείχη πατρῶα· πολύδακρυς δ' ἀφικόμην,  
 χρόνιος ἰδὼν μέλαθρα καὶ βωμούς θεῶν  
 γυμνάσιά θ' οἷσιν ἐνετράφην, Δίρκης θ' ὕδωρ  
 370 ὦν οὐ δικαίως ἀπελαθεὶς ξένην πόλιν  
 ναίω, δι' ὅσων ὄμμ' ἔχων δακρυρροοῦν

ἀλλ' ἐκ γὰρ ἄλγους ἄλγος αὖ σέ δέρκομαι  
 [κᾶρα ξυρῆκες καὶ πέπλους μελαγχίμους]  
 ἔχουσιν, οἷμοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐγὼ κακῶν.  
 ὥς δεινὸν ἔχθρα, μῆτερ, οἰκείων φίλων  
 καὶ δυσλύτους ἔχουσα τὰς διαλλαγὰς.  
 τί γὰρ πατήρ μοι πρέσβυς ἐν δόμοισι δρᾷ,  
 σκότον δεδορκώς; τί δὲ κασίγνηται δύο,  
 ἣ που στένουσι τλήμονας φυγὰς ἐμάς,

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

380 κακῶς θεῶν τις Οἰδίπου φθείρει γένος  
 οὕτω γὰρ ἤρξατ', ἄνομα μὲν τεκεῖν ἐμέ,  
 κακῶς δὲ γῆμαι πατέρα σὸν φῦναί τε σέ.  
 ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα, δεῖ φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν  
 ὅπως δ' ἔρωμαι, μή τι σὴν δάκω φρένα,  
 δέδοιχ', ἃ χρήζω διὰ πόθου δ' ἐλήλυθα.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

### POLYNEICES

Wisely, and yet not wisely, have I come,  
Mother, mid foes yet all men are constrained  
To love their fatherland; who saith not so,  
Sporteth with words, his heart is elsewhere 360  
In such misgiving came I, in such dread  
Lest treachery slay me, of my brother framed,  
That through the city sword in hand I passed,  
Aye keenly glancing round One stay I had —  
The truce and thy fair faith drew me within  
These walls ancestral. Full of tears I came,  
So late to see home, altars of the Gods,  
The athlete-stead that trained me, Duce's spring,  
Whence banished wrongfully, in a strange town  
dwell, mine eyes a fountain ever of tears 370

Thee too, for sorrow's crown of sorrow, I see  
With shaven head, and in dark mourning robes  
Clad—woe is me for my calamities !  
Mother, how dire is strife betwixt near kin,  
How hopeless reconciliation is !  
What doth mine ancient father in his halls,  
Whose light is darkness ? And my sisters twain—  
Do these bemoan mine exile's misery ?

### JOCASTA

Foully doth some God ruin Oedipus' line  
Thus it began—I bare forfended issue , 380  
Wed under curse thy sire,—and thou wast born !  
Yet wherefore this ? The Gods' will must we bear  
But how to ask the thing I would I fear,  
Lest I should gall thy soul, yet long for this

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἐξερῶτα, μηδὲν ἐνδεὲς λίπης  
ἂ γὰρ σὺ βούλει, ταῦτ' ἐμοί, μήτερ, φίλα.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ πρῶτον ὦν χρήζω τυχεῖν,  
τί τὸ στέρεσθαι πατρίδος, ἥ κακὸν μέγα,

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μέγιστον· ἔργῳ δ' ἐστὶ μείζον ἢ λόγῳ.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

390 τίς ὁ τρόπος αὐτοῦ; τί φυγάσιν τὸ δυσχερές;

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐν μὲν μέγιστον, οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

δούλου τόδ' εἶπας, μὴ λέγειν ἅ τις φρονεῖ.

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰς τῶν κρατούντων ἀμαθίας φέρειν χρεών.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τοῦτο λυπρὸν, συνασφεῖν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς.

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος παρὰ φύσιν δουλευτέον.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὥς λόγος.

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καλοῖς βλέπουσαί γ' ὄμμασιν, μέλλουσι δέ.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος αὐτὰς διεσάφησ' οὔσας κενάς;

### ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχουσιν ἀφροδίτην τιν' ἡδεῖαν κακῶν

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

400 πόθεν δ' ἐβόσκου πρὶν γάμοις εὔρεῖν βίον;

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Nay, ask ; leave no desire unsatisfied ,  
Foi, mother, that thou wouldst is dear to me

JOCASTA

First, then, I ask thee that I fain would learn  
What meaneth exile ? Is it a sore ill ?

POLYNEICES

The sorest In deed sorer than in word

JOCASTA

In what wise ? Where for exiles lies its sting ? 390

POLYNEICES

This most of all—a curb is on the tongue

JOCASTA

That is the slave's lot, not to speak one's thought !

POLYNEICES

The unwisdom of his rulers must one bear

JOCASTA

Haid this, that one partake in folly of fools !

POLYNEICES

Yokes nature loathes must be foi profit boine

JOCASTA

Yet hopes be exiles' meat, so runs the saw

POLYNEICES

Hopes look with kind eyes, yet they long delay

JOCASTA

But doth not time lay bare their emptiness ?

POLYNEICES

Ah, but sweet witchery mid ills have they !

JOCASTA

Whence wast thou fed, ere marriage brought thee  
substance ? 400

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποτέ μὲν ἐπ' ἡμαρ εἶχον, εἴτ' οὐκ εἶχον ἄν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

φίλοι δὲ πατρὸς καὶ ξένοι σ' οὐκ ὠφέλουν ,

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εὖ πράσσει τὰ φίλων δ' οὐδέν, ἦν τι δυστυχῆς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ἡγέμενιά σ' ἦρεν εἰς ὕψος μέγα ;

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κακὸν τὸ μὴ ἔχειν τὸ γένος οὐκ ἔβοσκε με

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἡ πατρίς, ὡς ἔοικε, φίλτατον βροτοῖς

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐδ' ὀνομάσαι δύναι' ἂν ὡς ἐστὶν φίλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἦλθες Ἄργος , τίν' ἐπίνοιαν ἔσχεθες ,

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδ'· ὁ δαίμων μ' ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

σοφὸς γὰρ ὁ θεός· τίνι τρόπῳ δ' ἔσχες λέχος ,

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχρησ' Ἀδράστῳ Λοξίας χρησμόν τινα

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ποιοῦν ; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ; οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κάπρῳ λέοντί θ' ἀρμόσαι παίδων γάμους.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ σοὶ τί θηρῶν ὀνόματος μετῆν, τέκνον ;

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

νύξ ἦν, Ἀδράστου δ' ἦλθον εἰς παραστάδας.



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Whiles had I daily bread, and whiles had not

JOCASTA

Helped they not thee, thy father's friends and  
guests ?

POLYNEICES

Prosper — friends vanish if thou prosper not

JOCASTA

Did high birth bring thee not to high estate ?

POLYNEICES

A curse is penury Birth fed me not

JOCASTA

Most dear, meseems, to men is fatherland

POLYNEICES

How dear, thou couldst not even utter it

JOCASTA

To Argos how cam'st thou ? With what intent ?

POLYNEICES

I know not Heaven to my fate summoned me

JOCASTA

Wise is the God How didst thou win thy bride ?

POLYNEICES

To Adrastus Loxias spake an oracle

JOCASTA

What was it ? How mean'st thou ? I cannot guess 410

POLYNEICES

*" Thy daughters wed to a lion and a boar "*

JOCASTA

Son, with a brute's name what hadst thou to do ?

POLYNEICES

'Twas night to Adrastus' palace-porch I came

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κοίτας ματεύων ἢ φυγάς πλανώμενος ,

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἦν ταῦτα· κατὰ γ' ἦλθεν ἄλλος αὖ φυγάς

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τίς οὗτος , ὥς ἄρ' ἄθλιος κάκείνος ἦν

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

Τυδεύς, ὃν Οἰνέως φασὶν ἐκφύναι πατρός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

420

τί θηρσὶν ὑμᾶς δῆτ' Ἄδραστος ἤκασεν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

στρωμνῆς ἐς ἀλκὴν οὐνεκ' ἦλθομεν πέρι

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐνταῦθα Ταλαοῦ παῖς συνῆκε θέσφατα ,

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κᾶδωκεν ἡμῖν δύο δυοῖν νεάνιδας

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἄρ' εὐτυχεῖς οὖν τοῖς γάμοις ἢ δυστυχεῖς ,

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐ μεμπτὸς ἡμῖν ὁ γάμος εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἐξέπεισας δεῦρό σοι σπέσθαι στρατόν ,

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

δισσοῖς Ἄδραστος ὤμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε,

[Τυδεῖ τε κάμοι· σύγγαμος γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,]

430

ἄμφω κατάξειν εἰς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ' ἐμέ

πολλοὶ δὲ Δαναῶν καὶ Μυκηναίων ἄκροι

πάρεισι, λυπρὰν χάριν, ἀναγκαίαν δ' ἐμοὶ

διδόντες· ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν στρατεύομαι

πόλιν θεοὺς δ' ἐπώμοσ' ὥς ἀκουσίως

τοῖς φιλτάτοις τοκεῦσιν ἡράμην δόρυ

ἄλλ' εἰς σὲ τείνει τῶνδε διάλυσις κακῶν,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

**JOCASTA**

Seeking a couch, as homeless exiles roam ?

## POLYNEICES

Even that      Another exile thither came

**JOCASTA**

Who? In what hapless plight was he withal!

## POLYNEICES

Tydeus, who sprang, men say, of Oeneus' loins

**JOCASTA**

Why to Adrastus seemed ye as wild beasts? 420

## POLYNEICES

For that we fell to fighting for our couch

**JOCASTA**

Then Talaus' son read right the oracle?

## POLYNEICES

Yea—to us twain gave his young daughters twain

**JOCASTA**

Blest or unblest, then, art thou in thy bride?

## POLYNEICES

Unto this day I find no fault in her

**JOCASTA**

How didst thou win yon host to follow thee ?

## POLYNEICES

To his two daughters' husbands swore Adiaslus,  
Tydeus and me,—my marriage-kinsman he,—  
To bring both home from exile, me the first  
Danaan and Mycenean chiefs be here  
Many—a needful, yet a mournful grace  
To me, for I against my country march  
And, by the Gods I swear, unwillingly  
I lift the spear against my father's house  
But with thee rests the assuaging of these ills,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μῆτερ, διαλλάξασαν ὁμογενεῖς φίλους  
 παῦσαι πόνων με καὶ σὲ καὶ πᾶσαν πόλιν.  
 πάλαι μὲν οὖν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔρῳ·  
 τὰ χρήματ' ἀνθρώποισι τιμιώτατα  
 440 δύνάμιν τε πλείστην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει  
 ἀγὼ μεθήκω δεῦρο μυρίαν ἄγων  
 λόγῃην· πένης γὰρ οὐδὲν εὐγενὴς ἀνὴρ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν Ἑτεοκλῆς εἰς διαλλαγὰς ὅδε  
 χωρεῖ· σὸν ἔργον, μῆτερ Ἰοκάστη, λέγειν  
 τοιούσδε μύθους οἷς διαλλάξεις τέκνα

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μῆτερ, πάρειμι τήνδε σοὶ χάριν διδοῦς  
 ἦλθον. τί χρὴ δρᾶν, ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγῳ.  
 ὥς ἀμφὶ τείχῃ καὶ ξυνωρίδας λόχων  
 450 τάσσω ἐπέσχον πόλιν, ὅπως κλύοιμί σου  
 κοινὰς βραβείας, αἷς ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν  
 τόνδ' εἰσεδέξω τειχέων πείσασά με.

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐπίσχες οὗτοι τὸ ταχὺ τὴν δίκην ἔχει·  
 βραδεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλείστον ἀνύουσιν σοφόν  
 σχάσον δὲ δεινὸν ὄμμα καὶ θυμοῦ πνοάς·  
 οὐ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμητον εἰσορᾷς κᾶρα  
 Γοργόνος, ἀδελφὸν δ' εἰσορᾷς ἦκοντα σόν.  
 σύ τ' αὖ πρόσωπον πρὸς κασίγνητον στρέφε,  
 Πολύνεικες· εἰς γὰρ ταῦτόν ὄμμασι βλέπων  
 460 λέξεις τ' ἄμεινον τοῦδέ τ' ἐνδέξει λόγους  
 παραινέσαι δὲ σφῶν τι βούλομαι σοφόν·  
 ὅταν φίλος τις ἀνδρὶ θυμωθεὶς φίλῳ  
 εἰς ἐν συνελθὼν ὄμματ' ὄμμασιν διδῶ,  
 ἐφ' οἷσιν ἦκει, ταῦτα χρὴ μόνον σκοπεῖν,  
 κακῶν δὲ τῶν πρὶν μηδενὸς μνείαν ἔχειν.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Mother, to set at one those one in blood,  
And end mine, thine, and all the city's toils  
Old is the saw,—yet will I utter it —  
*Wealth in men's eyes is honoured most of all,*  
*And of all things on earth hath chiefest power* 440  
Captaining countless spears for this I come,  
For the high-born in poverty is naught

### CHORUS

Lo, unto parley Eteocles comes  
Mother Jocasta, thine the task to speak  
Words whereby thou shalt set thy sons at one  
*Enter ETEOCLES*

### ETEOCLES

Here am I, mother—all for grace to thee  
I come What needs to do? Be speech begun  
For I have stayed from marshalling round the walls  
The close-linked cordon of defence, to hear  
Thy mediation for the which thou hast wrought 450  
On me to admit this man within our walls

### JOCASTA

Forbear haste brings not justice in its train  
But slow speech winneth oftenest wisdom's end.  
Refrain fierce look and passion's stormy breath.  
The Gorgon's severed head thou seest not;  
Thou seest thine own brother hither come  
And thou, unto thy brother turn thy face,  
Polynices, for, if thou but meet his eye,  
Thou shalt the better speak, and hear his words  
Fain would I wisely counsel thee, and thee 460  
When he whose wrath is hot against his friend  
Cometh to meet him, standeth eye to eye,  
Let him look only at that for which he came,  
And cherish no remembrance of old wrongs

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγος μὲν οὖν σὸς πρόσθε, Πολύνεικες τέκνον·  
 σὺ γὰρ στράτευμα Δαναιδῶν ἤκεις ἄγων,  
 ἄδικα πεπονθώς, ὥς σὺ φῆς κριτῆς δέ τις  
 θεῶν γένοιτο καὶ διαλλακτῆς κακῶν

### ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- 470 ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφνυ,  
 κοῦ ποικίλων δεῖ τᾶνδιχ' ἐρμηνευμάτων  
 ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καιρόν· ὁ δ' ἄδικος λόγος  
 νοσῶν ἐν αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ πατρὸς δωμάτων προῦσκεψάμην  
 τοῦμόν τε καὶ τοῦδ', ἐκφυγεῖν χρήζων ἄρὰς  
 ἄς Οἰδίπους ἐφθέγγεατ' εἰς ἡμᾶς ποτε,  
 ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἐκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός,  
 δοὺς τῷδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον,  
 ὥστ' αὐτὸς ἄρχειν αὖθις ἀνὰ μέρος λαβὼν  
 480 καὶ μὴ δι' ἔχθρας τῷδε καὶ φόνου μολῶν  
 κακόν τι δρᾶσαι καὶ παθεῖν, ἃ γίγνεται  
 ὁ δ' αἰνέσας ταῦθ' ὀρκίους τε δοὺς θεούς,  
 ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὧν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει  
 τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος.  
 καὶ νῦν ἔτοιμός εἰμι τάμαντοῦ λαβὼν  
 στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ' ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός,  
 οἰκεῖν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἶκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβὼν  
 καὶ τῷδ' ἀφεῖναι τὸν ἴσον αὖθις αὖ χρόνον,  
 καὶ μήτε πορθεῖν πατρίδα μήτε προσφέρειν  
 490 πύργοισι πηκτῶν κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις,  
 ἃ μὴ κυρήσας τῆς δίκης πειράσομαι  
 δρᾶν. μάρτυρας δὲ τῶνδε δαίμονας καλῶ,  
 ὥς πάντα πράσσω σὺν δίκῃ, δίκης ἄτερ  
 ἀποστεροῦμαι πατρίδος ἀνοσιώτατα.  
 ταῦτ' αὖθ' ἕκαστα, μήτερ, οὐχὶ περιπλοκάς

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Son Polyneices, be the first word thine,  
For thou hast brought yon host of Danaus' sons,  
Winged, as thou pleadest Now be some God judge  
Hereof, and reconciler of these ills

### POLYNEICES

Plain and unvarnished is the tale of truth,  
And justice needs no subtle sophistries 470  
Itself hath fitness, but the unrighteous plea,  
Having no soundness, needeth cunning salves

I had regard unto my father's house,  
My weal, and this man's fam to 'scape the curse  
Uttered of Oedipus against us once,  
Of mine own will I went from this realm forth,  
Left him for one year's round to rule our land,  
Myself in turn to take the sovereignty,  
And not in hate and bloodshed clash with him,  
And do and suffer ill—as now befalls 480  
And he consented, in the Gods' sight swore,  
Yet no whit keepeth troth, but holdeth still  
The kingship and mine half the heritage

Now ready am I, so I receive mine own,  
Forth from this land to send my war-array,  
To take mine house, in turn therein to dwell,  
And for like space to yield it him again,  
And not to waste my fatherland, nor bring  
Assault of scaling-ladders to her towers,  
Which, save I win my right, will I essay 490  
To do I call the Gods to witness this—  
That, wholly dealing justly, robbed am I  
Of fatherland, unjustly, impiously.  
These things have I said, mother, point by point,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγων ἀθροίσας εἶπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφοῖς  
καὶ τοῖσι φαύλοις ἔνδιχ', ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοὶ μέν, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθ' Ἑλλήνων χθόνα  
τεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' οὖν ξυνετά μοι δοκεῖς λέγειν

## ΕΥΕΟΚΛΗΣ

500 εἰ πᾶσι ταὐτὸ καλὸν ἔφυ σοφόν θ' ἄμα,  
οὐκ ἦν ἂν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις  
νῦν δ' οὐθ' ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἴσον βροτοῖς,  
πλὴν ὀνόμασιν, τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε.  
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐδέν, μήτερ, ἀποκρύψας ἐρῶ·  
ἄστρον ἂν ἔλθοιμ' ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς  
καὶ γῆς ἔνερθε δυνατὸς ὦν δρᾶσαι τάδε,  
τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ὥστ' ἔχειν Τυραννίδα.  
τοῦτ' οὖν τὸ χρηστόν, μήτερ, οὐχὶ βούλομαι  
ἄλλω παρεῖναι μᾶλλον ἢ σφάζειν ἐμοί·  
510 ἀνανδρία γάρ, τὸ πλεον ὅστις ἀπολέσας  
τοῦλασσον ἔλαβε. πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αἰσχύνομαι,  
ἐλθόντα σὺν ὅπλοις τόνδε καὶ πορθοῦντα γῆν  
τυχεῖν ἂν χρήζει καὶ γὰρ ἂν Θήβαις τόδε  
γένοιτ' ὄνειδος, εἰ Μυκηναίου δορὸς  
φόβῳ παρείην σκῆπτρα τὰμὰ τῷδ' ἔχειν.  
χρῆν δ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ὅπλοισι τὰς διαλλαγάς,  
μήτερ, ποιεῖσθαι· πᾶν γὰρ ἐξαιρεῖ λόγος  
ὃ καὶ σίδηρος πολεμίων δράσειεν ἄν.  
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἄλλως τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν θέλει,  
ἔξεστ'· ἐκεῖνο δ' οὐχ ἐκὼν μεθήσομαι,  
520 ἄρχειν παρόν μοι, τῷδε δουλεύσαί ποτε  
πρὸς ταῦτ' ἵτω μὲν πῦρ, ἵτω δὲ φάσγανα,  
ζεύγνυσθε δ' ἵππους, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἀρμάτων,  
ὥς οὐ παρήσω τῷδ' ἐμὴν τυραννίδα



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Not wrapp'd in webs of words, but, in the eyes  
Of wise or simple, naked right, meseems

### CHORUS

To me—albeit Hellas nursed me not,  
Yet to me soundly seemest thou to plead

### ETEOCLES

We're wisdom gauged alike of all, and honour,  
No strife of warring words we're known to men. 500  
But "fairness," "equal rights"—men know them not  
They name then names, no being they have as things

Now, mother, nothing feigning will I speak —  
I would mount to the risings of the stairs  
Or sun, would plunge 'neath earth, if this I could,  
So to win Power, diviner than all gods  
This precious thing, my mother, will I not  
Yield to another, when myself might keep  
No man's part this, to let the better slip  
And grasp the worse! Nay more—I think foul shame 510  
That *he* should come with arms, lay waste the land,  
And win his heart's desire. This were reproach  
To Thebes, if I, by spears of Argos cowed,  
Should yield my sceptre up for him to hold  
With arms should he not come in quest of peace,  
Mother, for parley can accomplish all  
That even steel of foes can bring to pass  
If he on other terms will dwell in Thebes,  
That may he *This* consent I not to yield  
—I, who may rule, shall I be thrall to him? 520

Wherefore let fire and sword have free course now!  
Yoke ye the steeds, with chariots fill the plains —  
I will not render him my sovereignty

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

εἴπερ γὰρ ἀδικεῖν χρή, τυραννίδος πέρι  
κάλλιστον ἀδικεῖν, τᾶλλα δ' εὖσεβεῖν χρεών.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ λέγειν χρή μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς,  
οὐ γὰρ καλὸν τοῦτ', ἀλλὰ τῇ δίκῃ πικρόν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τέκνον, οὐχ ἅπαντα τῷ γήρᾳ κακά,  
Ἐτεόκλεες, πρόσσεστιν' ἀλλ' ἡμπειρία  
530 ἔχει τι λέξαι τῶν νέων σοφώτερον  
τί τῆς κακίστης δαιμόνων ἐφίεσαι  
Φιλοτιμίας, παῖ, μὴ σύ γ' ἄδικος ἢ θεός·  
πολλοὺς δ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαίμονας  
εἰσῆλθε κᾶξῃλθ' ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ τῶν χρωμένων  
ἐφ' ἧ σὺ μαίνει κεῖνο κάλλιον, τέκνον,  
'Ισότητα τιμᾶν, ἧ φίλους ἀεὶ φίλοις  
πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχοις  
συνδεῖ· τὸ γὰρ ἴσον νόμιμον ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ,  
540 τῷ πλέονι δ' ἀεὶ πολέμιον καθίσταται  
τοῦλασσον ἐχθρῶς θ' ἡμέρας κατάρχεται  
καὶ γὰρ μέτρ' ἀνθρώποισι καὶ μέρη σταθμῶν  
'Ισότης ἔταξε κᾶριθμὸν διώρισε,  
νυκτός τ' ἀφεγγές βλέφαρον ἡλίου τε φῶς  
ἴσον βαδίζει τὸν ἐνιαύσιον κύκλον,  
κουδέτερον αὐτῶν φθόνον ἔχει νικώμενον.  
εἴθ' ἥλιος μὲν νύξ τε δουλεύει βροτοῖς,  
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξει δωμάτων ἔχων ἴσον  
καὶ τῷδ' ἀπονέμειν, κᾶτα ποῦ 'στιν ἡ δίκη;  
τί τὴν τυραννίδ', ἀδικίαν εὐδαίμονα,  
550 τιμᾶς ὑπέρφευ, καὶ μέγ' ἡγησai τόδε,  
περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον; κενὸν μὲν οὖν.  
ἧ πολλὰ μοχθεῖν πόλλ' ἔχων εὐδαίμονα  
βούλει; τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλέον, ὄνομ' ἔχει μόνον·

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

If wrong may e'er be right, for a throne's sake  
Were wrong most right —be God in all else feared !

CHORUS

Befits not fair speech glozing deeds unfaul .  
Not fair it is, but an offence to justice

JOCASTA

My son Eteocles, evil unalloyed  
Cleaves not to old age . nay, experience  
Can plead more wisely than the lips of youth 530  
Why at Ambition, worst of deities,  
Son, graspest thou ? Do not . she is Queen of  
Wrong

Homes many and happy cities enters she,  
Nor leaves till ruined are her votaries  
Thou art mad for her !—better to honour, son,  
Equality, which knitteth friends to friends,  
Cities to cities, allies unto allies  
Nature gave men the law of equal rights,  
And the less, ever marshalled foe against 540  
The greater, ushers in the dawn of hate  
Measures for men Equality ordained,  
Meting of weights and number she assigned  
The sightless face of night, and the sun's beam  
Equally pace along their yearly round,  
Nor either envieth that it must give place  
Sun, then, and night are servants unto men  
Shalt thou not brook to halve your heritage  
And share with him ? Ah, where is justice then  
Why overmuch dost thou prize Sovranty—  
Injustice throned !—and count it some great thing ? 550  
Is worship precious ? Nay, 'tis vanity  
Wouldst have, with great wealth in thine halls, great  
travail ?

What is thy profit ?—profit but in name ;

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἐπεὶ τά γ' ἄρκοῦνθ' ἱκανὰ τοῖς γε σώφροσιν.  
 οὔτοι τὰ χρήματ' ἴδια κέκτηνται βροτοί,  
 τὰ τῶν θεῶν δ' ἔχοντες ἐπιμελούμεθα  
 ὅταν δὲ χρήζωσ', αὐτ' ἀφαιροῦνται πάλιν  
 [ὁ δ' ὄλβος οὐ βέβαιος, ἀλλ' ἐφήμερος]  
 ἄγ', ἦν σ' ἔρωμαι δύο λόγῳ προθεῖς' ἅμα,  
 560 πόττερα τυραννεῖν ἢ πόλιν σῶσαι θέλεις,  
 ἐρεῖς τυραννεῖν, ἦν δὲ νικήσῃ σ' ὅδε  
 Ἀργεῖά τ' ἔγχῃ δόρυ τὸ Καδμείων ἔλῃ,  
 ὄψῃ δαμασθὲν ἄστυ Θηβαῖον τόδε,  
 ὄψῃ δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας κόρας  
 βία πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθουμένας  
 ὀδυνηρὸς ἄρ' ὁ πλοῦτος, ὃν ζητεῖς ἔχειν,  
 γενήσεται Θήβαισι, φιλότιμος δὲ σὺ  
 σοὶ μὲν τάδ' αὐδῶ σοὶ δὲ Πολύνεικες λέγω·  
 ἀμαθεῖς Ἀδραστος χάριτας εἰς σ' ἀνήψατο,  
 570 ἀσύνητα δ' ἦλθες καὶ σὺ πορθήσων πόλιν  
 φέρ', ἦν ἔλῃς γῆν τήνδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,  
 πρὸς θεῶν, τρόπαια πῶς ἀναστήσεις Δίι,  
 πῶς δ' αὖ κατάρξει θυμάτων, ἐλὼν πάτραν,  
 καὶ σκῦλα γράψεις πῶς ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοαῖς,  
 Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνείκης θεοῖς  
 ἀσπίδας ἔθηκε; μήποτ', ὦ τέκνον, κλέος  
 τοιόνδε σοι γένοιθ' ὑφ' Ἑλλήνων λαβεῖν  
 ἦν δ' αὖ κρατηθῆς καὶ τὰ τοῦδ' ὑπερδράμῃ,  
 πῶς Ἀργος ἥξεις μυρίους λιπῶν νεκρούς,  
 580 ἐρεῖ δὲ δῆ τις ὦ κακὰ μνηστεύματα  
 Ἀδραστε προσθείς, διὰ μιᾶς νυμφῆς γάμον  
 ἀπωλόμεσθα δύο κακῶ σπεύδεις, τέκνον,  
 κείνων στέρεσθαι, τῶνδὲ τ' ἐν μέσῳ πεσεῖν.  
 μέθετον τὸ λίαν, μέθετον ἀμαθίαι δυοῖν,  
 εἰς ταῦθ' ὅταν μόλῃτον, ἔχθιστον κακόν

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Seeing enough sufficeth for the wise  
 Mortals hold their possessions not in fee :  
 We are but stewards of the gifts of God :  
 Whene'er he will, he claims his own again  
 And wealth abides not, 'tis but for a day

Come, if I set two things before thee, and ask,  
 " Wouldst thou be lord or saviour of thy Thebes ? " 560  
 Wilt thou say, " Lord ? " But if this man prevail,  
 And Argos' spears bear down Cadmean might,  
 Then conquered shalt thou see this city of Thebes,  
 And many captive maidens shalt thou see  
 Dishonoured with foul outrage by the foe  
 . Yea, all this wealth thou covetest shall become  
 Thebes' curse, and thou shalt be ambition's fool

This to thee , and to thee, Polyneices, this :—  
 A foolish grace Adrastus did to thee ;  
 Madly thou too hast marched to ravage Thebes 570  
 Come, if thou smite this land,—which God forbid,—  
 'Fore heaven, how wilt thou set Zeus' trophies up ?  
 How sacrifice for fatherland o'ercome ?  
 And how at Inachus' streams inscribe the spoils ?—  
 "*Polyneices hath burnt Thebes, and to the Gods*  
*Offers these shields*"—thus ? Never, son, be it thine  
 To win from lips of Hellenes such renown !  
 But, he triumphant, vanquished thou, to Argos  
 How canst thou come, here leaving myriads dead ?  
 And one shall say, " O cursed betrothal made 580  
 By thee, Adrastus ! For one bridal's sake  
 We are ruined ! " Evils twain thou draw'st on  
 thee,—

There, to lose all, here, fail mid thine empire  
 Forbear, forbear your vehemence ! When meet  
 Two headstrong fools, the issue is foulest ill

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, γένοισθε τῶνδ' ἀπότροποι κακῶν  
καὶ ξύμβασιν τιν' Οἰδίπου τέκνοις δότε

### ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μήτερ, οὐ λόγων ἔθ' ἀγών, ἀλλ' ἀνήλωται χρόνος  
οὐν μέσῳ μάτην, περαίνει δ' οὐδέν ἢ προθυμία·  
590 οὐ γὰρ ἂν ξυμβαίμεν ἄλλως ἢ 'πὶ τοῖς εἰρη-  
μένοις,  
ὥστ' ἐμὲ σκῆπτρων κρατοῦντα τῆσδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι  
χθονός  
τῶν μακρῶν δ' ἀπαλλαγείσα νουθετημάτων μ' ἔα  
καὶ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔξω κομίζου τειχέων, ἢ κατθανεῖ.

### ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πρὸς τίνος, τίς ὦδ' ἄτρωτος, ὅστις εἰς ἡμᾶς ξίφος  
φόνιον ἐμβαλὼν τὸν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἀποίσεται μόρον,

### ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγγύς, οὐ πρόσω βέβηκεν· εἰς χέρας λεύσσεις  
ἐμάς,

### ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰσορῶ· δειλὸν δ' ὁ πλοῦτος καὶ φιλόψυχον  
κακόν.

### ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κᾶτα σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἦλθες πρὸς τὸν οὐδέν ἐς  
μάχην;

### ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἄσφαλής γάρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἢ θρασὺς στρατη-  
λάτης.

### ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

600 κομπὸς εἰ σπονδαῖς πεποιθώς, αἶ σε σφάζουσιν  
θανεῖν.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Ah Gods, be ye averters of these ills,  
And set at one the sons of Oedipus !

ETEOCLES

Mother, 'tis too late for pailey, nay, the time in  
dallying spent [good intent  
Doth but run to waste, nor aught availeth this thy  
Never shall we be at one, except as I have laid it 590  
down, [wear the crown  
That in lordship over Thebes I sway the sceptre,  
Have thou done with tedious admonitions then, and  
let me be, [death shall light on thee  
And, for thee, thou get thee forth these walls, ere

POLYNICES

Death ?—of whom ?—what man so woundless, as to  
plunge his murderous sword [reward ?  
Into this my body, and not win himself the like

ETEOCLES

Nigh he is not far he standeth lo, these hands—  
hast eyes to see ?

POLYNEICES

Yea—and know how shrinks from death that claven  
curse, prosperity !

ETEOCLES

Yet against a battle-blenger thou must lead yon  
huge array !

POLYNEICES

Yea, for better than the reckless is the prudent  
captain eye

ETEOCLES

Safe behind the truce, from death that screens thee,  
vaunting dost thou stand !

600

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σέ δεύτερον δ' ἀπαιτῶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη  
χθονός

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἀπαιτούμεσθ'. ἐγὼ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω  
δόμον

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τοῦ μέρους ἔχων τὸ πλεῖον ,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

φήμ'. ἀπαλλάσσου δὲ γῆς

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ θεῶν βωμοὶ πατρώων—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὓς σὺ πορθήσων πάρει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κλύετε μου—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς δ' ἂν κλύοι σου πατρίδ' ἐπεστρατευμένου ,

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ θεῶν τῶν λευκοπώλων δώμαθ',

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οἷ στυγοῦσί σε

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἦλθες ἐξελῶν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀδικία γ', ὦ θεοί.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

Μυκήναις, μὴ ᾗθ' ἀνακάλει θεούς



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Ay, and screens thee '—once again my crown, mine  
heritage I claim

ETEOCLES

Naught to me are claims, for I will dwell in this  
mine house—mine own

POLYNEICES

Grasping more than thine is ?

ETEOCLES

Ay!—now get thee forth the land—begone!

POLYNEICES

Altars of our Gods ancestral,—

ETEOCLES

Whom to ravage thou art come !

POLYNEICES

Hear ye me !—

ETEOCLES

And who shall hear thee, bringer of war  
against thine home ?

POLYNEICES

And ye temples of the Gods of Stainless Steeds !—

ETEOCLES

Who loathe thy name !

POLYNEICES

I am banished from my country !—

ETEOCLES

He that to destroy it came

POLYNEICES

Wrongfully, ye Gods !

ETEOCLES

To Gods not here, but at Mycenae, cry

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀνόσιος πέφυκας,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἄλλ' οὐ πατρίδος, ὥς σύ, πολέμιος

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὅς μ' ἄμοιρον ἐξελαύνεις

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

610 καὶ κατακτενῶ γε πρός.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πάτερ, κλύεις ἅ πάσχω ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ οἶα δρᾶς κλύει.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σύ, μήτερ ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀθέμιτόν σοι μητρὸς ὀνομάζειν κῆρα

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πόλις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μολὼν ἐς Ἄργος ἀνακάλει Λέρνης ὕδωρ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἶμι, μὴ πόνει· σὲ δ' αἰνῶ, μήτερ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθι χθονός.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔξιμεν πατέρα δέ μοι δὸς εἰσιδεῖν

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν τύχοις.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλὰ παρθένους ἀδελφάς

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐδὲ τάσδ' ὄψει ποτέ,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Impious art thou—

ETEOCLES

Yea ?—but not my country's foe, as thou, am I

POLYNEICES

Who dost drive me forth defrauded !

ETEOCLES

Death withal I'll deal to thee. 610

POLYNEICES

Father, hear'st thou what I suffer ?

ETEOCLES

Nay, thy *doings* heareth he

POLYNEICES

And thou, mother ?

ETEOCLES

That thou name our mother, sacrilege it were

POLYNEICES

O my city !

ETEOCLES

Hence to Aigos call on Leina's water there

POLYNEICES

Fret thee not—I go I thank thee, mother

ETEOCLES

Forth the city ! Go !

POLYNEICES

Forth I go . yet on my father let me look !

ETEOCLES

Thou see him ! No !

POLYNEICES

Nay then, but my maiden sisters

ETEOCLES

These thou never more shalt see

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ κασίγνηται.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί ταύτας ἀνακαλεῖς ἔχθιστος ὢν ,

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μῆτερ, ἀλλά μοι σὺ χαῖρε.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

χαρτὰ γοῦν πάσχω, τέκνον

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκέτ' εἰμὶ παῖς σός

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εἰς πόλλ' ἀθλία πέφυκ' ἐγώ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὅδε γὰρ εἰς ἡμᾶς ὑβρίζει

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

620 καὶ γὰρ ἀνθυβρίζομαι

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποῦ ποτε στήσει πρὸ πύργων ,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὥς τί μ' ἱστορεῖς τόδε ,

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἰντιτάξομαι κτενῶν σε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κάμει τοῦδ' ἔρωσ ἔχει

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. τί δράσετ', ὦ τέκν' ;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πατρὸς οὐ φεύξεσθ' Ἑρινῦς ,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔρρέτω πρόπας δόμος.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

O my sisters !

ETEOCLES

Why dost call on these, their bitterest enemy ?

POLYNEICES

Farewell, O my mother ?

JOCASTA

Sooth, my son, I *fare well*, thus forlorn !

POLYNEICES

Son of thine no more !—

JOCASTA

To many a sorrow was thy mother born !

POLYNEICES

Since he doth me foul despite !

ETEOCLES

Foi foul despite received, I wis ! 620

POLYNEICES

Where before the towers wilt plant thee ?

ETEOCLES

Wherefore dost thou question this ?

POLYNEICES

I will face thee there to slay thee

ETEOCLES

Ha ! I long to have it so !

JOCASTA

Woe is me ! what will ye do, my sons ?

POLYNEICES

The issue's self shall show

JOCASTA

Flee, O flee your father's curses !

ETEOCLES

All our house let ruin seize !

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὥς τάχ' οὐκέθ' αἵματηρὸν τοῦμόν ἀργήσει ξίφος.  
τὴν δέ θρέψασάν με γαίαν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι  
ὥς ἄτιμος οἰκτρὰ πάσχων ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός,  
δοῦλος ὧς, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ταύτου πατρός Οἰδίπου  
γεγώς·

630 καὶν τί σοι, πόλις, γένηται, μὴ 'μέ, τόνδε δ' αἰτιῶ.  
οὐχ ἑκὼν γὰρ ἦλθον, ἄκων δ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός  
καὶ σύ, Φοῖβ' ἄναξ Ἀγνιεύ, καὶ μέλαθρα χαίρετε,  
ἥλικές θ' οὐμοί, θεῶν τε δεξιμῆλ' ἀγάλματα  
οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' εἴ μοι προσειπεῖν αὐθις ἔσθ' ὑμᾶς  
ποτε·

ἐλπίδες δ' οὐπω καθεύδουσ', αἷς πέποιθα σὺν  
θεοῖς

τόνδ' ἀποκτείνας κρατήσειν τῆσδε Θηβαίας  
χθονός.

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθ' ἐκ χώρας· ἀληθῶς δ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκη  
πατὴρ

ἔθετό σοι θεία προνοία νεικέων ἐπώνυμον.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

Κάδμος ἔμολε τάνδε γὰν

στρ.

Τύριος, ᾧ τετρασκελὴς

640 μόςχος ἀδάματος πέσσημα

δίκε τελεσφόρον διδοῦσα

χρησμόν, οὐ κατοικίσαι

πεδία νιν τὸ θέσφατον

πυροφόρ' Ἀόνων<sup>1</sup> ἔχρη,

καλλιπόταμος ὕδατος ἵνα τε

νοτὶς ἐπέρχεται ῥυτᾶς

Δίρκας χλοηφόρους

<sup>1</sup> Valckenaer : for MSS. δόμων.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Soon my sword, blood-beddened, shall abide no more  
in deedless ease [Gods in heaven,  
But I call to witness earth that nursed me, witness  
How with shame and piteous usage from the home-  
land I am driven, [Oedipus, came  
Like a bondman, not a son that of one father,  
City, whatsoe'er befall thee, blame not me: yon  
tyrant blame [willingly  
Willingly I came not, from the land am cast un- 630  
Farewell, Phoebus, Highway-king, O palace-bowers,  
farewell ye! [where sheep are slain!  
Friends of youth, farewell, and statues of the Gods  
For I know not if to me 'tis given to speak to you  
again [with Gods to aid,  
But my hope not yet doth sleep, wherein I trust,  
Him to slay, and hold the land of Thebes beneath  
my sceptre swayed

ETEOCLES

Get thee forth! Ha, truly Polyneices, "Man of  
many a feud," [thy feuds endured!  
Named thy father thee, with heavenly prescience of  
[Exit POLYNEICES.

CHORUS

To this land from Phoenicia Cadmus speeding (Sti)  
Came, till the heifer unbroken, leading  
The wanderer, cast her to earthward, telling 640  
That so was accomplished the oracle spoken  
When the God for the place of his rest gave token,  
Bidding take the Aonian plains for his dwelling,  
Where the golden spears of the wheat-ranks quiver,  
Where the outgushing flood of the lovely river  
Forth flashes from fountains of Dirce welling

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

650 καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας,  
 Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μί-  
 τηρ Διὸς γάμοισι,  
 κισσὸς δὲν περιστεφῆς  
 ἑλικτὸς εὐθύς ἔτι βρέφος  
 χλοηφόροισιν ἔρνεσιν  
 κατασκίοισιν ὀλβίσας ἐνώτισεν,  
 Βάκχιον χόρευμα παρθένοισι Θηβαίοισι  
 καὶ γυναιξὶν εὐίοις.

ἔνθα φόνιος ἦν δράκων ἀντ  
 Ἄρεος, ὠμόφρων φύλαξ  
 νάματ' ἔνυδρα καὶ ῥέεθρα  
 660 χλοερὰ δεργμάτων κόραισι  
 πολυπλάνοις ἐπισκοπῶν·  
 δὲν ἐπὶ χέρνιβας μολὼν  
 Κάδμος ὄλεσε μαρμάρῳ,  
 κρᾶτα φόνιον ὄλεσίθηρος  
 ὠλένας δικῶν βολαῖς,  
 δίας ἀμάτορος δ'  
 669 εἰς βαθυσπόρους γύας  
 668 γαπετεῖς δικῶν ὁδόν-  
 667 τας Παλλάδος φραδαῖσιν.<sup>1</sup>  
 670 ἔνθεν ἔξανῆκε γὰ  
 πάνοπλον ὄψιν ὑπὲρ ἄκρων  
 ὄρων χθονός· σιδαρόφρων  
 δέ νιν φόνος πάλιν ξυνῆψε γὰ φίλα.  
 αἵματος δ' ἔδευσε γαῖαν, ἃ νιν εὐηλόισι  
 δεῖξεν αἰθέρος πνοαῖς  
 καὶ σὲ τὸν προμάτορος ἐπῳδ.  
 Ἰοῦς ποτ' ἔκγονον

<sup>1</sup> Murray's arrangement, securing metrical correspondence.



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Over meadows and tilth-lands harvest-teeming,  
Where spring, from the spousals levin-gleaming  
Of Zeus, the God of the shout wild-ringing, 650  
And the ivy arching its bowers around him,  
With the fairy chains of its greenness bound him,  
To the babe with its sudden tendrils clinging,  
Overmantling with shadow the Blessing-laden,  
For a theme of the Bacchanal dance unto maiden  
Of Thebes, and to matron evoc-singing

There on the hallowed fountain's border (Ant)  
Was the dragon of Ares, a ruthless waider,  
And the glare of his eyeballs fearful-flashing  
Wandered in restless-roving keenness  
O'er the humming tunnels, the mirrored greenness 660  
Then came to the spring for the lustral washing  
Cadmus, and hurled at the monster, and slew it,  
For he snatched a boulder, his strong arm threw it  
Down on the head of the slaughterer crashing  
Then, of Pallas, the motherless Goddess, bidden,  
O'er the deep-furrowed earth, in her breast to be  
hidden,

He scattered the teeth from the grim jaws parted  
And the travailing glebe flung up bright blossom 670  
Of mail-clad warriors over the bosom  
Of the earth, but slaughter the iron-hearted  
Again with the earth their mother blent them,  
And drenched with their blood the breast which had  
sent them

Forth, when to sun-quicken'd an they upstart'd

Unto thee too, Epaphus, scion (Epode)  
Of our first mother Io, I moan,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

680 Ἐπαφον, ὦ Διὸς γένεθλον,  
ἐκάλεσ' ἐκάλεσα βαρβάρῳ βοᾷ,  
ἰώ, βαρβάροις λιταῖς,  
βᾶθι βᾶθι τάνδε γᾶν·  
σοί νιν ἔκγονοι κτίσαν,  
ἄν διώνυμοι θεαί,  
Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα  
Δαμάτηρ θεά,  
πάντων ἄνασσα, πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός,  
ἐκτήσαντο· πέμπε πυρφόρους  
θεάς, ἄμυνε τᾶδε γᾶ  
πάντα δ' εὐπετῇ θεοῖς

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

690 χώρει σὺ καὶ κόμιζε τὸν Μενοικέως  
Κρέοντ', ἀδελφὸν μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης ἐμῆς,  
λέγων τάδ', ὥς οἰκεία καὶ κοινὰ χθονὸς·  
θέλω πρὸς αὐτὸν συμβαλεῖν βουλευμάτα,  
πρὶν εἰς μάχην τε καὶ δορὸς τάξιν μολεῖν  
καίτοι ποδῶν σῶν μόχθον ἐκλύει παρών·  
ὁρῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους στείχοντ' ἐμούς

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἦ πόλλ' ἐπήλθον εἰσιδεῖν χρήζων σ', ἄναξ  
Ἐτεόκλεες, πέριξ δὲ Καδμείων πύλας  
φύλακάς τ' ἐπήλθον σὸν δέμας θηρώμενος

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

700 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σ' ἔχρηζον εἰσιδεῖν, Κρέον·  
πολλῷ γὰρ ἡὔρον ἐνδεεῖς διαλλαγὰς,  
ὥς εἰς λόγους συνῆψα Πολυνείκει μολῶν

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἤκουσα μείζον αὐτὸν ἢ Θήβας φρονεῖν,  
κῆδει τ' Ἀδράστου καὶ στρατῷ πεποιθότα.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Unto thee, of our lord Zeus sprung,  
With my alien chant upflung  
And with prayers of an alien tongue ! 680  
Thy sons, who reared Thebes to thee, cry on  
Their father—O come to thine own !  
For Demeter, Persephone, wearing  
Twin names, have our land in waid—  
Even gracious Demeter All-queen,  
Who is Earth, nurse of all that hath been,—  
O send them, thy people to screen  
From the evil, the Queens Torch-bearing !—  
Is there aught for the Gods too hard ?

ETEOCLES (*to attendant*)

Go thou, and Cleon bring, Menoeceus' son, 690  
Who is my mother's, even Jocasta's brother  
This tell him, that I would commune with him  
Touching our own advantage and the land's,  
Ere we go battleward and range the spears  
But lo, he cometh, sparing thy foot's toil  
Myself behold him drawing nigh mine halls

*Enter CREON*

CREON

Seeking to see thee, far I have wended, King  
Eteocles, round to all Cadmean gates  
And guards, still searching for thy face, I passed

ETEOCLES

Sooth, Cleon, fain was I to look on thee 700  
For little worth I found his terms of peace,  
When I for parley Polyneices met

CREON

Beyond Thebes his ambition soaks, I hear,  
By Adrastus' kinship, and his host, puffed up

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ' εἰς θεοὺς χρὴ ταῦτ' ἀναρτήσαντ' ἔχειν  
ἂ δ' ἐμποδὼν μάλιστα, ταῦθ' ἤκω φράσω

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα, τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἦκει τις αἰχμάλωτος Ἀργείων πάρα

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λέγει δὲ δὴ τί τῶν ἐκεῖ νεώτερον,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μέλλειν [πέριξ πύργοισι Καδμείων πόλιν  
ὄπλοις] ἐλίξειν αὐτίκ' Ἀργείων στρατόν

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξοιστέον τάρ' ὄπλα Καδμείων πόλει

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ; μὼν νεάζων οὐχ ὀράς ἂ χρῆν' σ' ὀρᾶν;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐκτὸς τάφρων τῶνδ', ὥς μαχουμένους τάχα

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σμικρὸν τὸ πλῆθος τῆσδε γῆς, οἱ δ' ἄφθονοι

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγὼ δα κείνους τοῖς λόγοις ὄντας θρασεῖς

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔχει τιν' ὄγκον Ἄργος Ἑλλήνων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει τάχ' αὐτῶν πεδίον ἐμπλήσω φόνου

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θέλοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὀρῶ πολλοῦ πόνου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὥς οὐ καθέξω τειχέων εἴσω στρατόν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ μὴν τὸ νικᾶν ἐστὶ πᾶν εὐβουλία.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But these things in the Gods' hands must we leave  
Of our main stumblingblock I came to tell

ETEOCLES

What shall this be ? Thy drift is dark to me

CREON

A captive from the Argive host is come

ETEOCLES

What tidings bringeth he of dealings there ?

CREON

That Argos' host will straightway wind the net      710  
Of arms round Cadmus' burg and all her towers

ETEOCLES

Then Cadmus' burg must lead forth her array,—

CREON

Whither ? Sees not thy rash youth what it should ?

ETEOCLES

Across yon trenches, as to fight forthwith

CREON

Small is the host of this land, countless theirs

ETEOCLES

I know them for tongue-valiant warriors

CREON

Argos hath high repute mid Hellas' sons

ETEOCLES

Fear not then slaughter soon shall load the plain

CREON

That would I yet herein I see grim toil

ETEOCLES

Not I will pen mine host within the walls '      720

CREON

Yet wholly in good counsel victory lies

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βούλει τράπωμαι δῆθ' ὁδοὺς ἄλλας τινάς ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πάσας γε, πρὶν κίνδυνον εἰς ἅπαξ μολεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εἰ νυκτὸς αὐτοῖς προσβάλοιμεν ἐκ λόχου ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ σφαλεῖς γε δεῦρο σωθήσῃ πάλιν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἴσον φέρει νύξ, τοῖς δὲ τολμῶσιν πλέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐνδυστυχῆσαι δεινὸν εὐφρόνης κνέφας.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἄμφι δεῖπνον οὔσι προσβάλω δόρυ ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκπληξις ἂν γένοιτο νικῆσαι δὲ δεῖ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βαθὺς γέ τοι Διρκαῖος ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἅπαν κάκιον τοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι καλῶς

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δ', εἰ καθιππεύσαιομεν Ἀργείων στρατόν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

κάκει πέφρακται λαὸς ἄρμασιν πέριξ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα δράσω ; πολεμίοισι δῶ πόλιν ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μὴ δῆτα· βουλευέου δ', ἐπεὶπερ εἰ σοφός

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς οὖν πρόνοια γίγνεται σοφωτέρα ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς φασιν, ὥς ἤκουσ' ἐγώ,—

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Wouldst thou I turned me unto other paths ?

CREON

Any path, ere on one cast all be staked

ETEOCLES

How if by night we fall on them from ambush ?

CREON

Yea,—if, miscarrying, safe thou mayst return

ETEOCLES

Night equals all, yet helps the venturous most

CREON

Yet, for ill-speed, night's gloom is terrible

ETEOCLES

Shall I make onset even as they sup ?

CREON

A brief alarm —'tis victory we need

ETEOCLES

Dirce's deep ford should hamper their retreat , 730

CREON

Naught were so good as ward us warily

ETEOCLES

How, if our horse charge down on Argos' host ?

CREON

There too their lines be fenced with chariots round

ETEOCLES

What shall I do then ?—yield our town to foes ?

CREON

Never Take thought, if prudent chief thou art

ETEOCLES

What counsel is more prudent, then, than mine ?

CREON

Seven champions are there with them, have I heard,—

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί προστετάχθαι δρᾶν; τὸ γὰρ σθένος βραχύ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόγων ἀνάσσειν ἐπὶ τὰ προσκεῖσθαι πύλαις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα δρῶμεν, ἀπορίαν γὰρ οὐ μενῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ πρὸς πύλαις ἐλοῦ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λόγων ἀνάσσειν ἢ μονοστόλου δορός,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόγων, προκρίνας οἵπερ ἀλκιμώτατοι,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ξυνήκ'· ἀμύνειν τειχέων προσαμβάσεις

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ ξυστρατήγους· εἰς δ' ἄνῆρ οὐ πάνθ' ὀράῃ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει προκρίνας ἢ φρενῶν εὐβουλία;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἀμφότερον· ἀπολειφθὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν θάτερον.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔσται τάδ' ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπτάπυργον ἐς πόλιν

τάξω λοχαγούς πρὸς πύλαισιν, ὡς λέγεις,

ἴσους ἴσοισι πολεμίοισιν ἀντιθείς.

ὄνομα δ' ἐκάστου διατριβὴ πολλή· λέγειν,

ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων.

ἀλλ' εἰμ', ὅπως ἂν μὴ καταργῶμεν χέρα

καὶ μοι γένοιτ' ἀδελφὸν ἀντήρη λαβεῖν

καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης ἐλεῖν δορί,

κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.

γάμους δ' ἀδελφῆς Ἀντιγόνης παιδός τε σοῦ

Αἰμονος, εἴαν τι τῆς τύχης ἐγὼ σφαλῶ,



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Where to appointed ? Seven men's might were small !

CREON

To lead then bands to assail our seven gates

ETEOCLES

What then ? I wait not counsels of despair 740

CREON

Seven choose thou too to front them at the gates.

ETEOCLES

To lead our bands, or fight with single spear ?

CREON

To lead our bands choose thou our mightiest,—

ETEOCLES

Ay so—to avert the scaling of the walls

CREON

And under-captains one man sees not all

ETEOCLES

For valour chosen, or for prudent wit ?

CREON

Nay, both without its fellow, each is naught

ETEOCLES

This shall be Now to the seven towers will I,  
And plant chiefs, as thou biddest, at the gates,  
Champion for champion, ranged against the foe 750  
To tell each o'er, were costly waste of time,  
When foes be camped beneath our very walls  
But I will go, that mine hands loiter not  
God grant I meet my brother face to face, -  
Clash in the grapple, and slay him with the spear—  
Slay him, who came to lay my country waste !  
But, for Antigone's marriage with thy son  
Haemon,—if aught untoward hap to me,—

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- σοὶ χρὴ μέλεσθαι τὴν δόσιν δ' ἐχέγγουν  
 760 τὴν πρόσθε ποιῶ νῦν ἐπ' ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς.  
 μητέρος ἀδελφὸς εἶ τί δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν,  
 τρέφ' ἀξίως νιν σοῦ τε τήν τ' ἐμὴν χάριν  
 πατὴρ δ' ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμαθίαν ὀφλισκάνει,  
 ὄψιν τυφλώσας οὐκ ἄγαν σφ' ἐπήνεσα·  
 ἡμᾶς τ' ἀραιῖσιν, ἣν τύχη, κατακτενεῖ.  
 ἐν δ' ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ἀργόν, εἴ τι θέσφατον  
 οἰωνόμαντις Τειρεσίας ἔχει φράσαι,  
 τοῦδ' ἐκπυθέσθαι ταῦτ' ἐγὼ δὲ παῖδα σὸν  
 770 Μεινοικέα, σοῦ πατρὸς αὐτεπώνυμον,  
 ἄξοντα πέμψω δεῦρο Τειρεσίαν, Κρέον  
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἡδὺς εἰς λόγους ἀφίξεται  
 ἐγὼ δὲ τέχνην μαντικὴν ἐμεμψάμην  
 ἤδη πρὸς αὐτόν, ὥστε μοι μομφὰς ἔχειν  
 πόλει δὲ καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ' ἐπισκῆπτω, Κρέον·  
 ἥνπερ κρατήσῃ τὰμά, Πολυνείκους νέκυν  
 μήποτε ταφῆναι τῇδε Θηβαίᾳ χθονί  
 θνήσκειν δὲ τὸν θάψαντα, καὶ φίλων τις ἢ  
 σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' αὐδῶ· προσπόλοις δ' ἐμοῖς λέγω.  
 ἐκφέρετε τεύχη πάνοπλά τ' ἀμφιβλήματα,  
 780 ὥς εἰς ἀγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον δορὸς  
 ὀρμώμεθ' ἤδη ξὺν δίκῃ νικηφόρῳ.  
 τῇ δ' Εὐλαβείᾳ χρησιμωτάτῃ θεῶν  
 προσευχόμεσθα τήνδε διασώζειν πόλιν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ' αἵματι στρ  
 καὶ θανάτῳ κατέχει Βρομίου παράμουςος ἑορταῖς,  
 οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόροις στεφάνοισι νεάνιδος ὥρας  
 βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας, λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα  
 μέλπει

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

See thou to this    Their late betrothal-plight  
 Now, as I go forth, do I ratify 760  
 Thou art my mother's brother    why waste words ?  
 Give her fair nurture, for thy sake and mine  
 My father hath wrought folly against himself,  
 Blinding his eyes,—scant praise of mine he hath,—  
 And us his curse shall slay, if so it hap

One thing abides undone, to ask the seer  
 Teiresias touching this, if aught he hath  
 Of oracles to tell, and I will send  
 Thy son Menoeceus, of thy father named,  
 Creon, to bring Teiresias hitherward 770  
 With a good will shall he commune with thee  
 But the seer's art in time past have I mocked  
 Unto his face ; so he may bear me grudge

This, Creon, is mine hest to Thebes and thee —  
 If my cause conquer, never bury ye  
 Polyneices' corpse upon this Theban soil  
 Who buries him—though near and dear—must die  
 This to thee —to mine henchmen now I speak  
 Bring forth my arms, mine harness-panoply,  
 That to the imminent conflict of the spear 780  
 I may set forth, with Right to crown mine arms  
 To Heedfulness, of all Gods helpfullest,  
 That she will save this city, now we pray [Exit

### CHORUS

Ares the troublous, O whence is thy passion (Str)  
 For blood and for death, unattuned to the feasts of  
     the Revelry-king ? [ginal fashion  
 Not for the dances, the circlings of beauty, in vii-  
 Tossed are thy tresses abroad, nor to breathings of  
     flutes dost thou sing

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μούσαν, ἐν ᾧ χάριτες χοροποιοί,  
ἀλλὰ σὺν ὀπλοφόροις στρατὸν Ἀργείων ἐπι-  
πνεύσας

790 αἵματι Θήβαις

κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις.  
οὐδ' ὑπὸ θυρσομανεῖ νεβρίδων μέτα δῖνα,  
ἄρμασι καὶ ψαλίοις τετραβάμοσι μώνυχα πῶλον,  
ἰππεύαις ἐπὶ χεύμασι βαίνων  
Ἴσμηνοῖο θαόξεις, Ἀργείοις ἐπιπνεύσας  
Σπαρτῶν γένναν,  
ἀσπιδοφέρμονα θίασον ἔνοπλον,  
ἀντίπαλον κατὰ λάινα τείχεα  
χαλκῷ κοσμήσας  
ἧ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε  
μήσατο πῆματα γᾶς βασιλεῦσιν,

800 Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις.

ὦ ζαθέων πετάλων πολυθηρότα-  
τον νάπος, Ἀρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφον ὄμμα Κιθαι-  
ρών,  
μήποτε τὸν θανάτῳ προτεθέντα, λόχευμ' Ἰοκά-  
στας,  
ᾧφελος Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι βρέφος ἔκβολον οἴκων,  
χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμεν  
μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὐρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν  
πένθεα γαίης,  
Σφίγγ', ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ᾧδαῖς,  
ἃ ποτε Καδμογενῇ τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

A strain to whose witchery dances are wreathing .  
But with clangour of harness of fight through the  
Argive array art thou breathing  
War-lust for the blood of our Thebes athirst, 790  
As thou ledest the dance of a revel accurst  
Where no flutes ring  
Thou art found not where fawnskin and thyrsus in  
mad reel mingle and sunder,  
But with chariots and clashing of bits and with war-  
horses' footfall of thunder  
By Ismenus' brimming marge  
With the rushing of steeds dost thou charge,  
Into Argives breathing the battle-hate  
Against the sons of the Dragon-state ,  
And with harness of brass and with targe,  
Fronting our ramparts of stone, dost array  
A host for the fray  
A fearful Goddess in sooth is Staufe,  
By whose devising the troublous life  
Of the Labdacid kings of the land is anguish-rife 800  
Gorges mysterious of frondage, Cithaeron (Ant)  
Beast-haunted, O birth-bed of snows, O thou apple  
of Artemis' eye, [Jocasta, to rear on  
Ah that thou ne'er hadst received him, the babe of  
Thy lap such a fosterling, Oedipus, thrust from his  
home as to die,  
Life-marked with the blood-pin golden-looping !  
And O that the portent, the wings of the Sphinx  
from the mountain swooping,  
Down on the land for its woe had not come,  
The maiden that sang us a chant of doom,  
An untuneable cry,  
When with talons of feet and of hands on the ramparts  
of Cadmus she darted,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τείχεσι χριμπτομένα φέρειν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον  
φῶς

- 810 γένναν, ἂν ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἀιδας  
Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει· δυσδαίμων δ' ἔρις ἄλλα  
θάλλει παίδων  
Οἰδιπόδα κατὰ δώματα καὶ πόλιν  
οὐ γὰρ ὃ μὴ καλὸν οὐποτ' ἔφνυ καλόν,  
οὐδ' οἱ μὴ νόμιμοι† παῖδες  
ματρὶ λόχευμα, μίασμα πατρὸς δὲ συν-  
αίμονος εἰς λέχος ἦλθεν †

ἔτεκες, ὦ γᾶ, ἔτεκές ποτε, ἐπ'ωδ.

- 820 βάρβαρον ὥς ἀκοὰν ἐδάην ἐδάην ποτ' ἐν οἴκοις,  
τὰν ἀπὸ θηροτρόφου φοινικολόφιοι δράκοντος  
γένναν ὀδοντοφυῆ, Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος·  
Ἀρμονίας δέ ποτ' εἰς ὑμεναίους  
ἦλυσον οὐρανίδαί, φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα Θήβας  
τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπὸ πύργος ἀνέστα  
διδύμων ποταμῶν πόρον ἀμφὶ μέσον  
Δίρκας, χλοεροτρόφον ἃ πεδίον  
πρόπαρ Ἴσμηνοῦ καταδεύει·  
Ἰώ θ' ἃ κερόεσσα προμάτωρ  
Καδμείων βασιλῆας ἐγείνατο,  
830 μυριάδας δ' ἀγαθῶν ἐτέροις ἐτέ-  
ρας μεταμειβομένα πόλιν ἄδ' ἐπ' ἄ-  
κροις ἔστακεν Ἀρή-  
οις στεφάνοισιν

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And bearing his offspring to sun-litten cloudland un-  
trudged departed,  
    She whom Hades from dens of the dead                   810  
    Against Cadmus' children sped!  
But a new curse lights upon Thebes and her halls,  
For 'twixt Oedipus' sons the hell-seed falls  
    Of strife, and it blossometh red  
O, never may aught that is utter shame  
    Bear honour's name,  
Nay, nor the unblest spousal's fruit  
Are sons true-born, but with stain they pollute  
Then begette, the stock that spring from the self-  
    same root

(*Epode*)

Thou didst bear, O land, thou didst bear of old—  
For I heard, yea, I heard in mine home, in an alien  
    tongue, the story—  
From the dragon of crimson crest that battered on                   820  
    beasts of the wold                   [and her glory  
A race of the seed of his teeth, to be Thebes' reproach  
    To Harmonia's bridal descended of yore<sup>1</sup>  
The Children of Heaven, and Thebes' walls rose to the  
    hair's voice singing,                   [her brows' enringing,  
When the spell of Amphion's lyre fashioned towers for  
    In the space 'twixt the rivers twain that pour  
    Out of Dirce, whose dews drift greenness, shedding  
    Life o'er the plain by Ismenus spreading  
And our ancestress Io of horned brows  
Was mother of kings unto Cadmus' house  
Lo, how hath this city, through line on line                   830  
Of blessings unnumbered, attained to the height  
Where the War-god's crowns of victory-might  
    Shine!

<sup>1</sup> Cadmus wedded Harmonia, Ares' daughter

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

840

ἡγοῦ πάροιθε, θύγατερ ὥς τυφλῷ ποδὶ  
ὀφθαλμὸς εἰ σύ, ναυβάταισιν ἄστρον ὥς  
δεῦρ' εἰς τὸ λευρὸν πέδον ἵχνος τιθεῖς' ἐμόν,  
πρόβαινε, μὴ σφαλῶμεν ἀσθενὴς πατήρ  
κλήρους τέ μοι φύλασσε παρθένω χερὶ,  
οὓς ἔλαβον οἰωνίσματ' ὀρνίθων μαθὼν  
θάκοισιν ἐν ἱεροῖσιν, οὐ μαντεύομαι.  
τέκνον Μενοικεῦ, παῖ Κρέοντος, εἰπέ μοι  
πόση τις ἢ ἴλιος ποταμὸς ἄστεως ὁδὸς  
πρὸς πατέρα τὸν σόν' ὥς ἐμόν κάμνει γόνυ,  
πυκνὴν δὲ βαίνων ἤλυσιν μόλις περῶ

### ΚΡΕΩΝ

θάρσει. πέλας γάρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοισι σοῖς  
ἐξωρμίσαι σὸν πόδα λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον  
ὥς πᾶς' ἀπήνη πούς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ  
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κουφίσματα

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

εἶεν, πάρεσμεν· τί με καλεῖς σπουδῇ, Κρέον,

### ΚΡΕΩΝ

850

οὔπω λελήσμεθ' ἀλλὰ σύλλεξαι σθένος  
καὶ πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, αἶπος ἐκβαλὼν ὁδοῦ

### ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κόπῳ παρεῖμαι γοῦν Ἐρεχθιδῶν ἀπο  
δεῦρ' ἐκκομισθεὶς τῆς πάροιθεν ἡμέρας  
κάκει γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εὐμόλπου δορός,  
οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθηκ' ἐγὼ  
καὶ τόνδε χρυσοῦν στέφανον, ὥς ὀρεῖς, ἔχω  
λαβὼν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.

### ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰωνὸν ἐθέμην καλλίνικα σὰ στέφη·  
ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὥσπερ οἴσθα σύ,



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

*Enter TEIRESIAS led by his DAUGHTER, with MENOECUS*

TEIRESIAS

Lead on, my daughter to my sightless feet  
As eyes art thou, as star to mariners  
Hither, on even ground, plant thou my steps  
Guide, lest I stumble strengthless is thy sire  
Guard in thy maiden hand the augury-lots  
Which, when I marked the bodings of the birds,  
In the holy seat I took, where I divine 840  
Thou child Menoeceus, son of Creon, tell  
How much remaineth of the townward way  
To where thy father waits Faint wax my knees  
Journeying so long, scarce have I strength to go

CREON

Take heart, Teiresias, thou art nigh thy friends,  
And thy foot's anchorage Grasp his hand, my child  
Mule-car and aged foot alike are wont  
To await the upbearing of another's hand

TEIRESIAS

Here am I Why this instant summons, Creon ?

CREON

We have not forgotten Gather strength, regain 850  
Thy breath, cast off thy journey's toil and strain

TEIRESIAS

Sooth am I spent with toil, brought hitherward  
But yesterday from King Erechtheus' folk  
There too was war, against Eumolpus' spear,  
Where I to Cecrops' sons gave victory  
This crown of gold, as thou mayst see, have I  
As firstfruits of the foemen's spoils received.

CREON

I take thy triumph-crown for omen fair ;  
For we are, as thou knowest, in mid-surge

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

860     δορὸς Δαναιδῶν, καὶ μέγας Θήβαις ἀγὼν  
           βασιλεὺς μὲν οὖν βέβηκε κοσμηθεὶς ὅπλοις  
           ἤδη πρὸς ἄλκην Ἑτεοκλῆς Μυκηνίδα  
           ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπέσταλκ' ἐκμαθεῖν σέθεν πάρα,  
           τί δρῶντες ἂν μάλιστα σώσαιμεν πόλιν.

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

          Ἑτεοκλέους μὲν εἶνεκ' ἂν κλήσας στόμα  
           χρησμοὺς ἐπέσχον· σοὶ δ', ἐπεὶ χρήζεις μαθεῖν,  
           λέξω νοσεῖ γὰρ ἤδε γῇ πάλαι, Κρέον,  
           ἐξ οὗ τεκνώθη Λάιος βία θεῶν  
 870     πόσιν τ' ἔφυσε μητρὶ μέλεον Οἰδίπουν·  
           αἷ' θ' αἵματωποι δεργμάτων διαφθοραὶ  
           θεῶν σόφισμα καπνίδειξις Ἑλλάδι.  
           ἂν συγκαλύψαι παῖδες Οἰδίου χρόνῳ  
           χρήζοντες, ὥς δὴ θεοὺς ὑπεκδραμούμενοι,  
           ἤμαρτον ἀμαθῶς· οὐτε γὰρ γέρα πατρὶ  
           οὔτ' ἔξοδον δίδόντες ἄνδρα δυστυχή  
           ἐξηγρίωσαν· ἐκ δ' ἔπνευσ' αὐτοῖς ἀρὰς  
           δεινάς, νοσῶν τε καὶ πρὸς ἡτιμασμένος.  
           ἀγὼ τί οὐ δρῶν, ποῖα δ' οὐ λέγων ἔπη,  
           εἰς ἔχθος ἦλθον παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίου  
 880     ἐγγὺς δὲ θάνατος αὐτόχειρ αὐτοῖς, Κρέον·  
           πολλοὶ δὲ νεκροὶ περὶ νεκροῖς πεπτωκότες  
           Ἀργεῖα καὶ Καδμεῖα μίξαντες βέλη  
           πικροὺς γόους δώσουσι Θηβαίᾳ χθονί.  
           σύ τ' ὦ τάλαινα συγκατασκάπτει πόλι,  
           εἰ μὴ λόγοις τις τοῖς ἐμοῖσι πείσεται.  
           ἐκεῖνο μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν, τῶν Οἰδίου  
           μηδένα πολίτην μηδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι χθονός,  
           ὥς δαιμονῶντας κἀνατρέφοντας πόλιν.  
           ἐπεὶ δὲ κρεῖσσον τὸ κακὸν ἐστὶ τὰγαθοῦ,  
 890     μὴ ἔστιν ἄλλη μηχανὴ σωτηρίας.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Of Danaid war, and Thebes must wrestle hard 860  
 King Eteocles, clad in war-array,  
 Even now is gone to face Mycenae's might,  
 But to me gave in charge to inquire of thee  
 What deeds of ours shall best deliver Thebes.

### TEIRESIAS

For Eteocles sealed my lips had been,  
 The oracles withheld —since *thou* wouldst know,  
 I tell thee Creon, long this land hath ailed  
 Since Larus in heaven's despite begat  
 Oedipus, his own mother's wretched spouse  
 Yea, and the gory ruin of his eyes 870  
 Was heaven's device, for warning unto Greece

And Oedipus' sons, who fain had cloaked it o'er  
 With time, as though they could outrun the Gods,  
 In folly erred : vouchsafing to their sue  
 Nor honour nor free air, they stung to fury  
 His misery dread malison he breathed  
 Against them, suffering and shamed withal  
 What did I not ? What warnings spake I not ?—  
 And had for guerdon hate of Oedipus' sons  
 But nigh them, Creon, mutual slaughter looms ; 880  
 And corpses many upon corpses piled,  
 Transfixed with Argive and Cadmean shafts,  
 With bitter wails shall dower the Theban land

Thou, hapless town, art made a ruin-heap—  
 Except unto my bodings one give heed !  
 This had been best, that none of Oedipus' line  
 Remained in Thebes, nor citizen nor king  
 They are fiend-possessed and doomed to wreck the  
 state

But, seeing the evil hath o'erborne the good,  
 One other way of safety yet remains, 890

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ'—οὐ γὰρ εἰπεῖν οὔτ' ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἀσφαλὲς  
 μικρόν τε τοῖσι τὴν τύχην κεκτημένοις  
 πόλει παρασχεῖν φάρμακον σωτηρίας—  
 ἄπειμι, χαίρεθ' εἰς γὰρ ὧν πολλῶν μέτα  
 τὸ μέλλον, εἰ χρή, πείσομαι· τί γὰρ πάθω ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐπίσχεσ αὐτοῦ, πρέσβυ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μὴ' πιλαμβάνου

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μείνου, τί φεύγεις ,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἢ τύχη σ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλει σὺ μέντοι κούχλ' βουλήσει τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

900 καὶ πῶς πατρώαν γαῖαν οὐ σῶσαι θέλω ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

θέλεις ἀκούσαι δῆτα καὶ σπουδὴν ἔχεις ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἰς γὰρ τί μᾶλλον δεῖ προθυμίαν ἔχειν ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κλύοις ἂν ἤδη τῶν ἐμῶν θεσπισμάτων  
 πρῶτον δ' ἐκεῖνο βούλομαι σαφῶς μαθεῖν,  
 ποῦ 'στιν Μενοικεύς, ὃς με δεῦρ' ἐπήγαγεν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὃδ' οὐ μακρὰν ἄπεστι, πλησίον δέ σου.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπελθέτω νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ἐκάς.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But this to tell, for me were all unsafe,  
And bitter unto those whom fate endows  
With power to give their city safety's balm  
I go Farewell! What must befall will I—  
One midst a multitude—endure What help?  
[*Turns to go*]

CREON

Abide here, ancient!

TEIRESIAS

Lay not hold on me

CREON

Tarry why flee?

TEIRESIAS

Thy fortune flees, not I

CREON

Tell citizens and city safety's path

TEIRESIAS

Ay, fain art thou!—but loth thou soon shalt be

CREON

How?—not desire to save my fatherland? 900

TEIRESIAS

Wouldst thou indeed hear? Art thou set thereon?

CREON

Yea whereunto more earnest should I be?

TEIRESIAS

Then straightway shalt thou hear mine oracles.

But of this first would I be certified—

Where is Menoeceus, who hath led me hither?

CREON

He stands not far, but even at thy side

TEIRESIAS

Let him withdraw then from my bodings far

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐμὸς πεφυκὼς παῖς ἂν δεῖ συγῆσεται

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλει παρόντος δῆτά σοι τούτου φράσω ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

910 κλύων γὰρ ἂν τέρποιτο τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ὁδόν·

[ἂ δρῶντες ἂν σώσαιοτε Καδμείων πόλιν.]

σφάξαι Μενοικῇ τόνδε δεῖ σ' ὑπὲρ πάτρας  
σὸν παῖδ', ἐπειδὴ τὴν τύχην αὐτὸς καλεῖς

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί φῆς , τίν' εἶπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὦ γέρον ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄπερ πέφυκε, ταῦτα κἀνάγκη σε δρᾶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἐν βραχεῖ χρόνῳ κακά

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

σοί γ', ἀλλὰ πατρίδι μεγάλα καὶ σωτήρια

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐκ ἔκλυον, οὐκ ἤκουσα· χαιρέτω πόλις.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

920 ἀνὴρ ὃδ' οὐκέθ' αὐτός, ἐκνεύει πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

χαίρων ἴθ'· οὐ γὰρ σὼν με δεῖ μαντευμάτων

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπόλωλεν ἀλήθει', ἐπεὶ σὺν δυστυχεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πρὸς σε γονάτων καὶ γερασμίου τριχός,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

τί προσπίτνεις με ; δυσφύλακτ' αἰτεῖ κακά,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

He is my son, will keep what must be secret

TEIRESIAS

Wilt thou indeed I speak before his face ?

CREON

Yea ; of this safety gladly shall he hear 910

TEIRESIAS

Hear then the tenor of mine oracle,  
What deed of yours shall save the Thebans' town  
Menoeceus must thou slay for fatherland,  
Thy son—since thou thyself demandest fate

CREON

How say'st thou ? Ancient, what was this thy word ?

TEIRESIAS

As hath been doomed, even this thou needs must do

CREON

Oh countless ills in one short moment told !

TEIRESIAS

Thine ills—but great salvation for thy land

CREON

I heard not !—hearkened not !—away, thou Thebes !

TEIRESIAS

Not the same man is this he flincheth now 920

CREON

Depart in peace thy bodings need I not

TEIRESIAS

Is truth dead, for that thou art fortune-crost ?

CREON

Oh, by thy knees, and by thy reverend hair !—

TEIRESIAS

Why kneel ? Thou prayest for ruin inevitable

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σίγα πόλει δὲ τούσδε μὴ λέξης λόγους.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀδικεῖν κελεύεις μ'· οὐ σιωπήσαιμεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δή με δράσεις ; παιῖδά μου κατακτενεῖς ,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄλλοις μελήσει ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δ' εἰρήσεται.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἦλθε καὶ τέκνω κακόν ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

- 930 ὀρθῶς μ' ἐρωτᾷς κεῖς ἀγῶν' ἔρχει λόγων  
δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὐ δράκων ὁ γηγενῆς  
ἐγένετο Δίρκης ναμάτων ἐπίσκοπος,  
σφαγέντα φόνιον αἷμα γῇ δοῦναι χοάς,  
Κάδμου παλαιῶν Ἄρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων,  
ὃς γηγενεῖ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον  
καὶ ταῦτα δρῶντες σύμμαχον κτήσεσθ' Ἄρη.  
χθῶν δ' ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντὶ θ' αἵματος  
αἷμ' ἦν λάβη βρότειον, ἔξετ' εὐμενῇ  
940 γῇν, ἥ ποθ' ἡμῖν χρυσοπήληκα στάχυν  
σπαρτῶν ἀνῆκεν· ἐκ γένους δὲ δεῖ θανεῖν  
τοῦδ', ὃς δράκοντος γένυος ἐκπέφυκε παῖς.  
σὺ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἡμῖν λοιπὸς εἰ σπαρτῶν γένους  
ἀκέραιος, ἐκ τε μητρὸς ἀρσένων τ' ἄπο,  
οἱ σοί τε παῖδες Ἀΐμονος μὲν οὖν γάμοι  
σφαγὰς ἀπείργουσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἧθεος·  
κεῖ μὴ γὰρ εὐνῆς ἦψατ', ἀλλ' ἔχει λέχος·  
οὗτος δὲ πῶλος τῇδ' ἀνειμένος πόλει  
θανὼν πατρώαν γαῖαν ἐκσώσειεν ἄν.  
950 πικρὸν δ' Ἀδράστω νόστον Ἀργείοισι τε  
θήσει, μέλαιναν κῆρ' ἐπ' ὄμμασιν βαλὼν,



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Keep silence to the city tell not this

TEIRESIAS

Thou bidd'st me sin : I will not hold my peace.

CREON

What wilt thou do to me ?—wilt slay my son ?

TEIRESIAS

Others shall see to that 'Tis mine to speak

CREON

Whence came on me this curse, and on my son ?

TEIRESIAS

Fair question and demand that I show cause 930  
In that den where the earth-born dragon lay  
Watching the streams of Dirce, must he yield,  
Slaughtered, a blood-oblation to the earth,  
For Ares, nursing wrath 'gainst Cadmus long,  
Now would avenge his earth-born dragon's death  
Do this, and Ares for your champion win

If earth for seed gain seed, and human blood  
For blood, then kindly shall ye prove the earth  
Which once sent up a harvest golden-helmed  
Of Sown-men And it needeth that one die 940  
Born of the lineage of the Dragon's Teeth,  
And sole survivor art thou of the Sown  
Of pure blood both on sire's and mother's side,  
Thou and thy two sons. Haemon's spousals bar  
His slaughter, for he is not virgin man  
Though sealed the rite be not, betrothed is he.

But this lad, to his city consecrate,  
Dying, should yet redeem his fatherland,  
And for Adrastus and the Argives make  
Bitten return, their eyes with black death palled, 950

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

κλεινάς τε Θήβας. τοῖνδ' ἐλοῦ δυοῖν πότμοι  
τὸν ἕτερον· ἥ γὰρ παῖδα σῶσον ἥ πόλιν.  
τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν πάντ' ἔχεις· ἡγοῦ, τέκνον,  
πρὸς οἶκον ὅστις δ' ἐμπύρω χρήται τέχνη,  
μάταιος· ἦν μὲν ἐχθρὰ σημήνας τύχη,  
πικρὸς καθέστηχ' οἷς ἂν οἰωνοσκοπῇ·  
ψευδῇ δ' ὑπ' οἴκτου τοῖσι χρωμένοις λέγων  
ἀδικεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν. Φοῖβον ἀνθρώποις μόνον  
χρῆν θεσπιφδεῖν, ὃς δέδοικεν οὐδένα

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

960 Κρέον, τί σιγᾶς γῆρυν ἄφθογγον σχάσας,  
κάμοι γὰρ οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἐκπληξιν πάρα.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἂν τις εἴποι, δῆλον οἷ γ' ἐμοὶ λόγοι.  
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐποτ' εἰς τόδ' εἶμι συμφορᾶς,  
ὥστε σφαγέντα παῖδα προσθεῖναι πόλει.  
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φιλότεκνος βίος,  
οὐδ' ἂν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδά τις δοίη κτανεῖν.  
μή μ' εὐλογεῖτω τὰμά τις κτείνων τέκνα.  
αὐτὸς δ', ἐν ὥραίῳ γὰρ ἔσταμεν βίου,  
θνήσκειν ἔτοιμος πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον  
970 ἀλλ' εἶα, τέκνον, πρὶν μαθεῖν πᾶσαν πόλιν,  
ἀκόλαστ' ἑάσας μάντεων θεσπίσματα,  
φεῦγ' ὥς τάχιστα τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεὶς χθονός·  
λέξει γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ στρατηλάταις τάδε,  
πύλας ἐφ' ἑπτὰ καὶ λοχαγέτας μολῶν·  
κἂν μὲν φθάσωμεν, ἔστι σοι ὄωτήρία·  
ἦν δ' ὑστερήσης, οἰχόμεσθα, κατθανεῖ.

## ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ποῖ δῆτα φεύγω, τίνα πόλιν; τίνα ξένων;

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπου χθανὸς τῆσδ' ἐκπαδὼν μάλιστ' ἔσει,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And make Thebes glorious    One of these two fates  
Choose    either save the city, or thy son  
Now hast thou all my tale    Lead on, my child,  
Homeward    Who useth the diviner's art  
Is foolish    If he heraldeth ill things,  
He is loathed of those to whom he prophesies  
If, pitying them that seek to him, he lie,  
He wrongs the Gods    Sole prophet unto men  
Ought Phoebus to have been, who feareth none

[*Exit*

### CHORUS

Why silent, Creon, with lips held from speech ?    960  
On me, too, consternation weighs no less

### CREON

What should one say ?    . But clear mine answer is  
Never such depth of misery will I seek,  
As offer for my city a slaughtered son !  
For love of children filleth all men's life,  
And none to death would yield up his own child  
Let no man praise me while he slays my sons !  
Myself—who have reached the ripeness of my  
years—

For death stand ready, to redeem my land  
But up, my child, ere all the city hear    970  
Heed not the reckless words of soothsayers,  
But fly—with all speed get thee from the land !  
To the seven gates, the captains, will he go,  
And tell the rulers and the chieftains this  
Yet, may we but forestall him, thou art saved,  
But if thou lag, undone we are—thou diest

### MENOECEUS

But whither flee ?—what city seek ?—what friend ?

### CREON

Where thou from this land's reach shalt farthest be

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

MENOIKEΤΣ

οὐκουν σὲ φράζειν εἰκός, ἐκπονεῖν δ' ἐμέ ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Δελφούς περάσας—

MENOIKEΤΣ

980 ποῖ με χρή, πάτερ, μολεῖν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Αἰτωλίδ' εἰς γῆν.

MENOIKEΤΣ

ἐκ δὲ τῆσδε ποῖ περῶ ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Θεσπρωτὸν οὐδας

MENOIKEΤΣ

σεμνὰ Δωδώνης βάθρα ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔγνωσ.

MENOIKEΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ἔρυμά μοι γενήσεται ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πόμπιμος ὁ δαίμων.

MENOIKEΤΣ

χρημάτων δὲ τίς πόρος ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐγὼ πορεύσω χρυσόν

MENOIKEΤΣ

εὖ λέγεις, πάτερ.

χώρει νυν· ὥς σῆν πρὸς κασιγνήτην μολών,

ῆς πρῶτα μαστὸν εἴλκυσ', Ἰοκάστην λέγω,

μητρὸς στερηθεὶς ὀρφανός τ' ἀποζυγεῖς,

προσηγορήσων εἴμι καὶ σώσων βίον.

990 ἀλλ' εἶα, χώρει. μὴ τὸ σὸν κωλυέτω.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

MENOECEUS

It best beseems that thou tell, I perform

CREON

Pass Delphi—

MENOECEUS

Whither, father, must I go ?

980

CREON

Unto Aetolia

MENOECEUS

Whither journey thence ?

CREON

Thesprotia's soil

MENOECEUS

Dodona's hallowed floor ?

CREON

Thou say'st

MENOECEUS

What shall be my protection there ?

CREON

The God shall speed thee

MENOECEUS

How supply my need ?

CREON

I will find gold

MENOECEUS

Father, thou sayest well .

Haste then    Unto thy sister will I go,—

Jocasta, on whose bosom first I lay,

Reft of my mother, left an orphan lone,—

To bid her farewell, ere I flee for life

On then    pass in, be hindrance not in thee

990

[*Exit* CREON

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γυναῖκες, ὥς εὖ πατρός ἐξεῖλον φόβον  
 κλέψας λόγοισιν, ὥσθ' ἂ βούλομαι τυχεῖν  
 ὅς μ' ἐκκομίζει, πόλιν ἀποστερῶν τύχης,  
 καὶ δειλία δίδωσι. καὶ συγγνωστὰ μὲν  
 γέροντι· τοῦμόν δ' οὐχὶ συγγνώμην ἔχει,  
 προδότῃν γενέσθαι πατρίδος ἧ μ' ἐγείνατο  
 ὥς οὖν ἂν εἰδῇτ', εἴμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν  
 ψυχὴν τε δώσω τῇσδ' ὑπερθανεῖν χθονός.  
 αἰσχροὺν γάρ, οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλεύθεροι  
 κοῦκ εἰς ἀνάγκην δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένοι  
 στάντες παρ' ἀσπιδ' οὐκ ὀκνήσουσιν θανεῖν,  
 πύργων πάροιθε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὕπερ  
 ἐγὼ δέ, πατέρα καὶ κασίγνητον προδοὺς  
 πόλιν τ' ἐμαυτοῦ, δειλὸς ὥς ἔξω χθονὸς  
 ἄπειμ'· ὅπου δ' ἂν ζῶ, κακὸς φανήσομαι  
 μὰ τὸν μετ' ἄστρον Ζῆν' Ἄρη τε φοῖνιον,  
 ὃς τοὺς ὑπερτεῖλαντας ἐκ γαίας ποτὲ  
 Σπαρτοὺς ἀνακτας τῇσδε γῆς ἰδρύσατο.  
 ἀλλ' εἴμι καὶ στας ἐξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων  
 σφάξας ἐμαυτὸν σηκὸν ἐς μελαμβαθῇ  
 δράκοντος, ἔνθ' ὁ μάντις ἐξηγήσατο,  
 ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν· εἴρηται λόγος  
 στείχω δέ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχροὺν πόλει  
 δώσω, νόσου δὲ τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα.  
 εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἕκαστος ὃ τι δύναϊτό τις  
 χρηστὸν διέλθοι τοῦτο κείς κοινὸν φέροι  
 πατρίδι, κακῶν ἂν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων  
 πειρώμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖεν ἂν

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔβας ἔβας,  
 ὦ πτεροῦσσα, γᾶς λόχευμα

στρ.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Maidens, how well I have stilled my father's fear  
By guileful words, to attain the end I would !  
Me would he steal hence, robbing Thebes of hope,  
Branding me coward ! This might one forgive  
In age, but no forgiveness should be mine  
If I betray the city of my birth  
Doubt not but I will go and save the town,  
And give my soul to death for this land's sake  
'Twere shame that men no oracles constrain,  
Who have not fall'n into the net of fate, 1000  
Shoulder to shoulder stand, blench not from death,  
Fighting before the towers for fatherland,  
And I, betraying father, brother, yea,  
My city, craven-like flee forth the land—  
A dastard manifest, where'er I dwell !

By Zeus star-throned, by Ares, slaughter's lord,  
Who set on high in kingship over Thebes  
The Dragon-brood that cleft the womb of earth,  
Go will I, on the ramparts' height will stand,  
And o'er the Dragon's gloomy chasm-cave, 1010  
Whereof the seer spake, will I slay myself,  
And make my country free The word is said

I go, to give my country no mean gift,  
My life, from ruin so to save the land  
For, if each man would take his all of good,  
Lavish it, lay it at his country's feet,  
Then fewer evils should the nations prove,  
And should through days to come be prosperous

[*Exit*

### CHORUS

Thou camest, camest, O thou winged doom, (Str )  
Fruit of Earth's travailing, 1020

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

νερτέρου τ' Ἐχίδνας,  
 Καδμείων ἄρπαγά,  
 πολύφθορος πολύστονος,  
 μιξοπάρθενος,  
 δάιον τέρας,  
 φοιτάσι πτεροῖς  
 χαλαῖσί τ' ὠμοσίτοις·  
 Διρκαίων ἄ ποτ' ἐκ  
 τόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ'  
 ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μούσαν  
 ὀλομέναν τ' Ἑρινὺν  
 1030 ἔφερες ἔφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι  
 φόνια· φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν  
 ὃς τάδ' ἦν ὁ πράξας  
 ἰάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων,  
 ἰάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων  
 ἐστέναζον οἴκοις  
 ἰήιον βοᾶν βοάν,  
 ἰήιον μέλος μέλος  
 ἄλλος ἄλλ' ἐπωτότυζε  
 διαδοχαῖς ἀνὰ πτόλιν  
 βροντᾶ δὲ στεναγμὸς  
 1040 ἀχά τ' ἦν ὅμοιος,  
 ὁπότε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν  
 ἡ πτεροῦσσα παρθένος τιν' ἀνδρῶν.

χρόνῳ δ' ἔβα  
 Πυθίαις ἀποστολαῖσιν  
 Οἰδίπους ὁ τλάμων  
 Θηβαίαν τάνδε γᾶν  
 τότε ἄσμενοις, πάλιν δ' ἄχη·  
 ματρὶ γὰρ γάμους

ἀντ.



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Begotten of the Worm of Nether-gloom,  
On Cadmus' sons to spring  
Death-fraught, and fraught with moanings for the  
dead,  
Half maiden, half brute-beast,  
Monster of roving pinions, talons red  
From that law-avenue feast,  
Snatching from Duce's meads her young men,  
shrieking  
O'er them thy dissonant knell,  
Anguish of slaughter on our country wreaking,  
Wreaking a curse-doom fell ' 1030  
Ah, murderous God, these ill-fates for us who fashioned '!  
Moanings of mother's filled  
The shuddering homes, and maidens' moanings pas-  
sioned  
And wail to wail aye thrilled,  
And dunge to death-dunge, each to each replying  
The stricken city through—  
A nation's pang—as thunder pealed then crying, 1040  
When the winged maid with each new victim flying  
From earth, was lost to view  
  
(Ant)  
At last was Oedipus, woe-fated, bound  
From Pytho, hither led,—  
Our joy, but soon our grief,—who, triumph-crowned  
From that dark riddle read,  
Wretch, in foul bridal made his mother wife,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δυσγάμους τάλας  
 καλλίνικος ὦν  
 αἰνιγμάτων συνάπτει,  
 1050 μαιίνει δὲ πτόλιν·  
 δι' αἱμάτων δ' ἀμείβει  
 μυσαρὸν εἰς ἀγῶνα  
 καταβαλὼν ἀραῖσι  
 τέκεα μέλεος. ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ',  
 ὃς ἐπὶ θάνατον οἴχεται  
 γᾶς ὑπὲρ πατρώας,  
 Κρέοντι μὲν λιπὼν γόους,  
 τὰ δ' ἐπτάπυργα κληῖθρα γᾶς  
 1060 καλλίνικα θήσων.  
 γενοίμεθ' ὦδε ματέρες  
 γενοίμεθ' εὐτεκνοί, φίλα  
 Παλλὰς, ἃ δράκοντος αἶμα  
 λιθόβολον κατειργάσω,  
 Καδμείαν μέριμναν  
 ὀρμήσας' ἐπ' ἔργον,  
 ὅθεν ἐπέσυτο τάνδε γαῖαν  
 ἀρπαγαῖσι δαιμόνων τις ἄτα.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦή, τίς ἐν πύλαισι δωμαίων κυρεῖ ;  
 ἀνοίγεται, ἐκπορεύεται Ἰοκάστην δόμων.  
 ὦή μάλ' αὖθις· διὰ μακροῦ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως  
 1070 ἔξελθ', ἄκουσον, Οἰδίπου κλεινὴ δάμαρ,  
 λήξας' ὀδυρμῶν πενθίμων τε δακρύων.

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἡ που ξυμφορὰν ἤκεις φέρων  
 Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος, οὐ παρ' ἀσπίδα  
 βέβηκας αἰὲν πολεμίων εἴργων βέλη,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

1050

Polluted Thebes, and banned  
 His sons to stain in this accursèd strife  
 With brother-blood the hand  
 Praise to him, praise, who unto death is faring,  
 Yea, for his land to die,  
 Leaving to Cæon moans of love's despairing,  
 But setting victory  
 For crown upon the city seven-gated !  
 Ah, may such noble son  
 To bless mine happy motherhood be fated,  
 O Pallas, gracious one !—

1060

Pallas, of whom the sudden stone leapt, spilling  
 The dragon-warder's blood  
 Thou gav'st the thought the heart of Cadmus thrilling  
 To dare the deed whence rushed, with ravin filling  
 The land, a God's curse-flood

*Enter* MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Ho there ! Who standeth at the palace-gate ?  
 Open ye, bring Jocasta forth her bowers  
 Ho there, again ! Though late, yet come thou forth  
 Harken, renowned wife of Oedipus ,

1070

Cease from thy wailings and thy tears of grief

*Enter* JOCASTA

JOCASTA

Friend—friend !—thou com'st not sure with ill news  
 fraught  
 Of Eteocles' death, by whose shield aye  
 Thou marchedst, warding him from foemen's darts ?

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

[τί μοί ποθ' ἦκεις καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἔπος,]  
τέθηνκεν ἡ ζῆ παῖς ἐμός; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆ, μὴ τρέσῃς τόδ', ὥς σ' ἀπαλλάξω φόβου.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τί δ', ἐπτάπυργοι πῶς ἔχουσι περιβολαί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐστᾶσ' ἄθραυστοι, κοῦκ ἀνήρπασται πόλεις.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1080 ἦλθον δὲ πρὸς κίνδυνον Ἀργείου δορός;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀκμήν γ' ἐπ' αὐτήν· ἀλλ' ὁ Καδμείων Ἀρης  
κρείσσων κατέστη τοῦ Μυκηναίου δορός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐν εἰπέ πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι Πολυνείκους ἔπει  
οἶσθ', ὥς μέλει μοι καὶ τόδ', εἰ λεύσσει φάος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆ σοι ξυνωρὶς εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας τέκνων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εὐδαιμονοίης. πῶς γὰρ Ἀργείων δόρυ  
πυλῶν ἀπεστήσασθε πυργηρούμενοι,  
λέξον, γέροντα τυφλὸν ὥς κατὰ στέγας  
ἐλθοῦσα τέρψω, τῆσδε γῆς σεσωσμένης.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1090 ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανὼν  
πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρων στὰς μελάνδετον ξίφος  
λαιμῶν διῆκε τῇδε γῇ σωτήριον,  
λόχους ἐνειμεν ἐπτά καὶ λοχαγέτας  
πύλας ἐφ' ἐπτά, φύλακας Ἀργείου δορός,  
σὸς παῖς, ἐφέδρους δ' ἱππότας μὲν ἱππόταις  
ἔταξ', ὀπλίτας δ' ἀσπιδηφόροις ἔπι,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

What word of tidings bringest thou to me ?  
Dead is my son, or liveth he ?—declare

## MESSANGER

He lives      Fear not!    I rid thee so of dread

**JOCASTA**

And the seven towers, how fares the fence thereof?

## MESSANGER

They stand unshattered Thebes not yet is spoiled

**JOCASTA**

Were they sore perilled of the Argive spear? 1080

**MESSENGER**

At ruin's brink but stronger proved the might  
Of Cadmus' people than Mycenae's spear

**JOCASTA**

One thing, by heaven!—of Polynieces aught  
Canst tell? I yearn for this? Doth he see light?

## MESSANGER

Liveth thus far thy chariot-yoke of sons

**JOCASTA**

Blessings on thee ! How did ye thrust the spear  
Of Argos back from your beleaguered gates ?  
Tell, that I may rejoice the blind old man  
The halls within, with news of this land saved

## MESSANGER

When Creon's son, who for his country died, 1090  
Climbing a tower's height, had thrust the sword  
Black-hafted through his throat to save the land,  
Seven bands with captains to the seven gates,  
For watch and ward against the Argive spear,  
Thy son set, horsemen covering horsemen ranged,  
And men-at-arms behind the shield-bearers,

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ὥς τῷ νοσοῦντι τειχέων εἴη δορὸς  
 ἀλκὴ δι' ὀλίγου. περιγάμων δ' ἀπ' ὀρθίων  
 1100 Λεύκασπιν εἰσορῶμεν Ἀργείων στρατὸν  
 Τευμησὸν ἐκλιπόντα καὶ τάφρου πέλας  
 δρόμῳ συνῆψεν ἄστνυ Καδμείας χθονὸς  
 παιὰν δὲ καὶ σάλπιγγες ἐκελάδουν ὁμοῦ  
 ἐκείθεν ἔκ τε τειχέων ἡμῶν πάρα.  
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν προσῆγε Νηίσταις πύλαις  
 λόχον πυκναῖσιν ἀσπίσιν πεφρικότα  
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ Παρθενοπαῖος ἐκγονος,  
 ἐπίσημ' ἔχων οἰκεῖον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,  
 ἐκηβόλοις τόξοισιν Ἀταλάντην κάπρον  
 1110 χειρουμένην Αἰτωλὸν εἰς δὲ Προϊτίδας  
 πύλας ἐχώρει σφάγι' ἔχων ἐφ' ἄρματι  
 ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, οὐ σημεί' ἔχων  
 ὑβρισμέν', ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως ἄσημ' ὄπλα  
 Ὠγύγια δ' εἰς πυλώμαθ' Ἴππομέδων ἀναξ  
 ἔστειχ' ἔχων σημεῖον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει  
 στικτοῖς Πανόπτῃν ὄμμασιν δεδορκότα,  
 τὰ μὲν σὺν ἄστρον ἐπιτολαῖσιν ὄμματα  
 βλέποντα, τὰ δὲ κρύπτοντα δυνόντων μέτα,  
 ὥς ὕστερον θανόντος εἰσορᾶν παρῇν  
 Ὅμολοίσιν δὲ τάξιν εἶχε πρὸς πύλαις  
 1120 Τυδεύς, λέοντος δέρος ἔχων ἐπ' ἀσπίδι  
 χαίτῃ πεφρικός δεξιᾷ δὲ λαμπάδα  
 Τῖτάν Προμηθεὺς ἔφερεν ὥς πρήσων πόλιν.  
 ὁ σὸς δὲ Κρηναῖαισι Πολυνείκης πύλαις  
 Ἄρη προσῆγε· Ποτνιαδες δ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδι  
 ἐπίσημα πῶλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ,  
 εὖ πως στρόφυγξιν ἔνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι  
 πόρπαχ' ὑπ' αὐτόν, ὥστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν.  
 ὁ δ' οὐκ ἔλασσον Ἄρεος εἰς μάχην φρονῶν

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

That, where the wall's defence failed, succour of  
spears  
Might be hard by Then from the soaring towers  
We marked the white shields of the Argive host  
Leaving Teumessus Having neared the foss, 1100  
Suddenly charging closed they on Cadmus' burg  
Then paean swelled, and shattering trumpet shrilled,  
All blended, from the foe and from the walls

Parthenopaeus, that famed huntress' son,  
First led against the Gate Neistian  
A squadron horrent all with serried shields,  
On his mid-targe the blazon of his house,  
Atalanta slaying the Aetolian boar  
With shafts far-smiting Against Proetus' Gate,  
Slain victims on his chariot, marched the seer 1110  
Amphiaraus, with no proud device,  
But sober weapons void of blazonry  
The gates Ogygian King Hippomedon  
Assailed, in mid-targe bearing for device  
Argus, with gemmy eyes for aye at gaze,  
Some with the rising of the stars aglare,  
While, as the stars set, some were slumber-veiled,  
As might be seen thereafter, he being slain  
Against the Gate of Homole Tydeus took  
His stand, his shield draped with a lion's hide 1120  
All shaggy-haired Titan Prometheus bore  
A torch in hand there, as to burn the town

Thy son Polyneices at the Fountain Gate  
Led on the war Upon his shield the steeds  
Of Potniae racing in fear-frenzy sprang,  
Wheeled round within by pivots cunningly  
Hard by the hand-grip, that they seemed distraught.  
High-stomached for the fight as Ares' self,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- Καπανεύς προσῆγε λόχον ἐπ' Ἡλέκτραις πύλαις·  
 1130 σιδηρονώτοις δ' ἀσπίδος τύποις ἐπὴν  
 γίγας ἐπ' ὤμοις γηγενῆς ὄλην πόλιν  
 φέρων μοχλοῖσιν ἐξανασπάσας βάθρων,  
 ὑπόνοιαν ἡμῖν οἶα πείσεται πόλις.  
 ταῖς δ' ἐβδόμαις Ἀδραστος ἐν πύλαισιν ἦν,  
 ἑκατὸν ἐχίδναις ἀσπίδ' ἐκπληρῶν γραφῇ  
 ὕδρας ἔχων λαιοῖσιν ἐν βραχίουσιν  
 Ἀργεῖον αὖχην· ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων  
 δράκοντες ἔφερον τέκνα Καδμείων γνάθοις.  
 παρῇν δ' ἐκάστου τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ θεάματα  
 1140 ξύνθημα παραφέρουσι ποιμέσιν λόχων  
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τόξοισι καὶ μεσαγκύλοις  
 ἐμαρνάμεσθα σφενδόναίς θ' ἐκηβόλοις  
 πετρῶν τ' ἀραγμοῖς· ὥς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,  
 ἔκλαυξε Τυδεὺς χῶ σὸς ἐξαίφνης γόνος·  
 ὦ τέκνα Δαναῶν, πρὶν κατεξάνθαι βολαῖς,  
 τί μέλλετ' ἄρδην πάντες ἐμπίπτειν πύλαις,  
 γυμνῆτες ἱππῆς ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπιστάται,  
 ἡχῆς δ' ὅπως ἤκουσαν, οὔτις ἀργὸς ἦν  
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον κρᾶτας αἵματούμενοι,  
 1150 ἡμῶν τ' ἐς οὐδας εἶδες ἂν πρὸ τειχέων  
 πυκνοὺς κυβιστητήρας ἐκπεπνευκότας,  
 ξηρὰν δ' ἔδενον γαῖαν αἵματος ῥοαῖς.  
 ὁ δ' Ἀρκάς, οὐκ Ἀργεῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος  
 τυφῶς πύλαισιν ὥς τις ἐμπεσὼν βοᾷ  
 πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ὥς κατασκάψων πόλιν·  
 ἀλλ' ἔσχε μαργῶντ' αὐτὸν ἐναλίου θεοῦ  
 Περικλύμενος παῖς λᾶαν ἐμβαλὼν κάρα  
 ἀμαξοπληθῇ, γεῖσ' ἐπάλξεων ἄπο  
 ξανθὸν δὲ κρᾶτα διεπάλυνε καὶ ῥαφὰς  
 160 ἔρρηξεν ὁστέων, ἄρτι δ' οἰνωπὸν γένυν



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Led Capaneus his troop to Electra's Gate ,  
And, for his iron-faced buckler's blazonry, 1130  
An earth-born giant on his shoulders bore  
A whole town from its basement lever-wrenched,  
As token for us of our city's fate  
And at the seventh gate Adrastus was,  
His graven shield with five-score vipers thronged  
Swung on his left arm, even the Argive vaunt,  
The Hydra , and its serpents from our walls  
Were snatching Cadmus' children in their jaws  
Each chief's device I well might mark, who bare  
The watchword to the leaders of our bands 1140

Then first with bows and thong-spied javelins  
We battled, and with slings that smote from far,  
And crashing stones But when we 'gan prevail,  
Suddenly shouted Tydeus and thy son  
" Sons of the Danaans, ere their bolts quell you,  
Why do ye tarry, onward-hurling all,  
To assault their gates—light-armed, horse, chariot-  
lords? "

Soon as they heard that cry, was none hung back  
Many, with heads blood-dashed, were falling fast ,  
And of us many earthward flung thou hadst seen 1150  
Before the walls, like divers plunging, dead,  
Drenching the thirsty soil with streams of gore

But Atalanta's son—no Argive he—  
Hurls like a whirlwind at the gates, and shouts  
For fire and mattocks, as to raze the town.  
But his mid-fury Periclymenus stayed,  
The Sea-god's son, who hurled a wain-load crag,  
A battlement-coping, down upon his shield,  
Spattered abroad the golden head, and rent  
The knittings of its bones . the cheeks dark-flushed 1160

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- καθημάτωσεν· οὐδ' ἀποίσεται βίον  
 τῇ καλλιτόξῳ μητρὶ Μαινάλου κόρη  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ τάσδ' εἰσεῖδεν εὐτυχεῖς πύλας,  
 ἄλλας ἐπῆει παῖς σός, εἰπόμην δ' ἐγώ.  
 ὁρῶ δὲ Τυδῇ καὶ παρασπιστὰς πυκνοὺς  
 Αἰτωλίσιν λόγχαισιν εἰς ἄκρον στόμα  
 πύργων ἀκοντίζοντας, ὥστ' ἐπάλξεων  
 λιπεῖν ἐρίπνας φυγάδας· ἀλλὰ νιν πάλιν,  
 1170 κυναγὸς ὥσει, παῖς σὸς ἐξαθροίζεται,  
 πύργοις δ' ἐπέστησ' αὐθις. εἰς δ' ἄλλας πύλας  
 ἡπειρόμεσθα, τοῦτο παύσαντες νοσοῦν.  
 Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἵποιμ' ἂν ὥς ἐμαίνετο ,  
 μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις  
 ἔχων ἐχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασε,  
 μηδ' ἂν τὸ σεμνὸν πῦρ νιν εἰργαθεῖν Διὸς  
 τὸ μὴ οὐ κατ' ἄκρων περγάμων ἐλεῖν πόλιν  
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἅμ' ἡγόρευε καὶ πετρούμενος  
 ἀνεῖρφ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀσπίδ' εἰλίξας δέμας,  
 1180 κλίμακος ἀμείβων ξέστ' ἐνηλάτων βάθρα.  
 ἦδη δ' ὑπερβαίνοντα γεῖσα τειχέων  
 βάλλει κεραυνῷ Ζεὺς νιν ἐκτύπησε δὲ  
 χθών, ὥστε δεῖσαι πάντας ἐκ δὲ κλιμάκων  
 ἐσφενδονᾶτο χωρὶς ἀλλήλων μέλη,  
 κόμαι μὲν εἰς Ὀλυμπον, αἶμα δ' εἰς χθόνα,  
 χεῖρες δὲ καὶ κῶλ' ὥς κύκλωμ' Ἰξίονος  
 εἰλίσσεται· εἰς γῆν δ' ἔμπυρος πίπτει νεκρός.  
 ὥς δ' εἶδ' Ἀδραστος Ζῆνα πολέμιον στρατῷ,  
 ἔξω τάφρου καθίσεν Ἀργείων στρατόν.  
 οἱ δ' αὖ παρ' ἡμῶν δεξιὸν Διὸς τέρας  
 1190 ἰδόντες ἐξήλαυνον ἀρμάτων ὄχους  
 ἱππῆς· ὀπλῖταί τ' εἰς μέσ' Ἀργείων ὄπλα  
 συνῆψαν ἔγχη, πάντα δ' ἦν ὁμοῦ κακά

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dashed he with blood No life shall he bear back  
To his archer-mother, Maid of Maenalus  
Then, marking how at this gate all went well,  
Passed to the next thy son, I following still.  
There saw I Tydeus with his serried shields,  
With spears Aetolian javelining the height  
Of the roofless towers, that from the rampart's crest  
Ours fled in panic But thy son again  
Rallies them, as the hunter cheers his hounds ,  
So manned the walls anew To other gates 1170  
On pressed we, having stayed the mischief there

But how the madness tell of Capaneus ?  
For, grasping the long ladder's scaling rounds,  
On came he, and thus haughtily vaunted he,  
That not Zeus' awful fire should hold him back  
From razing from her topmost towers the town  
Thus crying, ever as hailed the stones on him,  
He climbed, with body gathered 'neath his targe,  
Aye stepping from smooth ladder-rung to rung  
But, even as o'er the ramparts rose his head, 1180  
Zeus smiteth him with lightning rang again  
The earth, that all quailed From the ladder flew  
His limbs abroad wide-whirling slingstone-like .  
Heavenward his hair streamed, earthward rained his  
blood .

Hands, feet—Ixion on his wheel seemed he—  
Whirled round To earth he fell, a corpse flame-  
blasted

Adrastus, seeing Zeus his army's foe,  
Without the trench drew off the Argive host  
Then, marking Zeus's portent fan for us,  
Forth of the gates our horse their chariots diave 1190  
Our footmen clashed through Argos' mid-array  
With levelled spears,—'twas turmoiled run all—

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἔθνησκον ἐξέπιπτον ἀντύγων ἄπο,  
τροχοί τ' ἐπήδων ἄξονές τ' ἐπ' ἄξοσι,  
νεκροὶ δὲ νεκροῖς ἐξεσωρεύονθ' ὁμοῦ.  
πύργων μὲν οὖν γῆς ἔσχομεν κατασκαφὰς  
εἰς τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν εἰ δ' εὐτυχῆς  
ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδε γῆ, θεοῖς μέλει  
καὶ νῦν γὰρ αὐτὴν δαιμόνων ἔσωσέ τις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200 καλὸν τὸ νικᾶν εἰ δ' ἀμείνον' οἱ θεοὶ  
γνώμην ἔχουσιν—εὐτυχῆς εἶην ἐγώ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καλῶς τὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰ τῆς τύχης ἔχει  
παῖδές τε γάρ μοι ζῶσι κακπέφευγε γῇ  
Κρέων δ' ἔοικε τῶν ἐμῶν νυμφευμάτων  
τῶν τ' Οἰδίπου δύστηνος ἀπολαῦσαι κακῶν,  
παιδὸς στερηθεὶς, τῇ πόλει μὲν εὐτυχῶς,  
ιδία δὲ λυπρῶς. ἀλλ' ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν,  
τί τὰπὶ τουτοῖς παῖδ' ἐμῶ δρασείετον

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἔα τὰ λοιπά· δεῦρ' αἰεὶ γὰρ εὐτυχεῖς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1210 τοῦτ' εἰς ὑποπτον εἶπας· οὐκ ἑατέον

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μεῖζόν τι χρήζεις παιῖδας ἢ σεσωσμένους ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τὰπίλοιπά γ' εἰ καλῶς πράσσω κλύειν

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μέθες μ'· ἔρημος παῖς ὑπασπιστοῦ σέθεν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κακόν τι κεύθεις καὶ στέγεις ὑπὸ σκότῳ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γε λέξαιμ' ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖσί σοι κακά.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Men dying—falling o'er the chariot-wheels—  
Wheels leaping—axles upon axles dashed,  
And corpses heaped on corpses all confused

So then for this day have we bann'd the fall  
Of our land's towers, but if good fortune waits  
On Thebes henceforth, this resteth with the Gods  
Only a God's hand rescued her to-day

**CHORUS**

Glorious is victory if more favours yet                    1200  
The Gods intend—ah, may I so be blest !

**JOCASTA**

Fair are the dealings of the Gods and Fate  
For lo, my sons live, and the land hath 'scaped  
But Creon hath, meseems, reaped evil fruit  
Of mine and Oedipus' marriage—hapless sire,  
Reft of his son, for blessing unto Thebes,  
But grief to him ! Take up the tale again,  
And tell what now my sons are bent to do

## ‘MESSENGER

Forbear the rest      Thus far 'tis well with thee

**JOCASTA**

Thou stirr'st surmisings ! I can not forbear ! 1210

## MESSANGER

How, wouldst thou more than know thy sons are safe?

**JOCASTA**

Yea, know if things to come be well for me

## MESSANGER

Now let me go thy son his henchman lacks.

**JOCASTA**

Some ill thou hid'st—in darkness veilest it !

## MESSENGER

I would not tell thee evil blent with good

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἦν μή γε φεύγων ἐκφύγῃς πρὸς αἰθήρα

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

αἰαῖ· τί μ' οὐκ εἶσας ἐξ εὐαγγέλου  
 φήμης ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηνῦσαι κακά ;  
 τὼ παῖδε τὼ σὼ μέλλετον, τολμήματα  
 1220 αἰσχιστα, χωρὶς μονομαχεῖν παντὸς στρατοῦ,  
 λέξαντες Ἀργείοισι Καδμείοισι τε  
 εἰς κοινὸν οἶον μήποτ' ὄφελον λόγον.  
 Ἔτεοκλῆς δ' ὑπῆρξ' ἀπ' ὀρθίου σταθεῖς  
 πύργου, κελεύσας σῖγα κηρῦξαι στρατῶ·  
 [ἔλεξε δ' ὦ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάται]  
 Δαναῶν ἀριστῆς, οἵπερ ἦλθετ' ἐνθάδε,  
 Κάδμου τε λαός, μήτε Πολυνείκους χάριν  
 ψυχὰς ἀπεμπῶλατε μήθ' ἡμῶν ὑπερ.  
 1230 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὸς τόνδε κίνδυνον μεθεῖς  
 μόνος συνάψω συγγόνῳ τῷ μῶ μάχην·  
 καὶν μὲν κτάνω τόνδ', οἶκον οἰκήσω μόνος,  
 ἥσσωμενος δὲ τῷδε παραδώσω μόνῳ.  
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀγῶν' ἀφέντες, Ἀργεῖοι, χθόνα  
 νίσσεσθε, βίοντες μὴ λιπόντες ἐνθάδε,  
 Σπαρτῶν τε λαὸς ἅλις ὅσος κεῖται νεκρὸς  
 τοσαῦτ' ἔλεξε σὸς δὲ Πολυνείκης γόνος  
 ἐκ τάξεων ὥρουσε κἀπήνει λόγους.  
 πάντες δ' ἐπερρόθησαν Ἀργεῖοι τάδε  
 Κάδμου τε λαὸς ὥς δίκαι' ἡγούμενοι.  
 240 ἐπὶ τοῖσδε δ' ἐσπείσαντο, καὶν μεταίχμιοις  
 ὅρκους συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῖν στρατηλάται.  
 ἤδη δ' ἔκρυπτον σῶμα παγχάλκοις ὅπλοις  
 δισσοὶ γέροντος Οἰδίου νεανία·  
 φίλοι δ' ἐκόσμου, τῆσδε μὲν πρόμον χθονὸς  
 Σπαρτῶν ἀριστῆς, τὸν δὲ Δαναϊδῶν ἄκροι.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

That shalt thou—except to heaven thou wing thy flight

MESSENGER

Alas ! why couldst thou let me not go hence  
After good tidings, but wouldst have the ill ?  
Thy two sons purpose single fight, apart  
From all the host—a desperate deed of shame ! 1220  
To Argives and Cadmeans one and all  
They spake that which would God they had left  
unsaid !

Eteocles from a lofty tower began—  
Having bid publish silence to the host—  
And said “ O battle-chiefs of Hellas-land,  
Lords of the Danaans who have hither come,  
And Cadmus' folk—for Polyneices' sake  
Sell not your lives, nor sell them in my cause  
For I myself will free you of this risk,  
And with my brother grapple alone in fight 1230  
If I slay him, mine halls I hold alone  
O'erthrown, I yield them up to him alone  
Argives, forbear the struggle, and return  
Unto your land, not leaving here your lives ;  
And of the Sown suffice the already dead ”  
Thus spake he , Polyneices then, thy son,  
Leapt from the ranks, and hailed the challenge-word ,  
And all the Argives shouted yea to this,  
And Cadmus' folk, as righteous in their eyes  
On these terms made they truce, and in mid-space 1240  
The chiefs took oaths whereby they should abide  
Then ancient Oedipus' two sons straightway  
'Gan case their bodies in all-brazen mail,  
Holpen of friends , by Theban lords the king  
Of this land, and by Danaan chiefs his brother

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἔσταν δὲ λαμπρῷ, χρῶμά τ' οὐκ ἡλλαξάτην  
μαργῶντ' ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰέναι δόρυ  
παρεξιόντες δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν φίλων  
λόγοισι θαρσύνοντες ἐξηύδων τάδε  
1250 Πολύνεικες, ἐν σοὶ Ζηνὸς ὀρθῶσαι βρέτας  
τρόπαιον Ἄργει τ' εὐκλεᾶ δοῦναι λόγον  
Ἐτεοκλέα δ' αὖ· νῦν πόλεως ὑπερμαχεῖς,  
σὺ καλλίνικος γενόμενος σκῆπτρων κρατεῖς  
τάδ' ἡγόρευον παρακαλοῦντες εἰς μάχην  
μάντεις δὲ μῆλ' ἔσφαζον, ἐμπύρους τ' ἀκμᾶς  
ῥήξεις τ' ἐνώμων, ὑγρότητ' ἐναντίαν,  
ἄκραν τε λαμπάδ', ἣ δυοῖν ὄρους ἔχει,  
νίκης τε σῆμα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἡσσωμένων  
ἄλλ' εἴ τιν' ἀλκὴν ἢ σοφοὺς ἔχεις λόγους  
1260 ἢ φίλτρ' ἐπιδῶν, στεῖχ', ἐρήτυσον τέκνα  
δεινῆς ἀμίλλης, ὥς ὁ κίνδυνος μέγας  
κάπαθλα δεινὰ δάκρυά σοι γενήσεται  
δισσοῖν στερεΐση τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τέκνοιν.

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τέκνον, ἔξελθ', Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων πάρος  
οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθελεύμασι  
νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις,  
ἀλλ' ἄνδρ' ἀρίστῳ καὶ κασιγνήτῳ σέθεν  
εἰς θάνατον ἐκνεύοντε κωλύσαί σε δεῖ  
ξὺν μητρὶ τῇ σῇ μὴ πρὸς ἀλλήλοιν θανεῖν.

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 1270 τίν', ὦ τεκοῦσα μῆτερ, ἐκπληξιν νέαν  
φίλοις αὐτεῖς τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος,

### ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἔρρει σὼν κασιγνήτων βίος



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

There stood they gleaming,—never paled their  
 cheeks,—  
 Each panting at his foe to dart the spear  
 On this side and on that their friends drew nigh,  
 With heartening words thus speaking unto them,  
 “Thine, Polyneices, is it to set up 1250  
 Zeus’ trophy-statue, and give Aigos fame”,  
 To Eteocles—“Thou for Thebes dost fight  
 Now triumph, and thou hold’st her sceptre fast”  
 So did they hail them, cheering them to fight  
 And the priests slew the sheep flame-tongue they  
 marked,  
 And flame-cleft, steamy reek that bodeth ill,  
 The pointed flame, which hath decisions twain,  
 Betokening victory or overthrow  
 If any power thou hast or cunning words,  
 Or spell of charms, go, pluck thou back thy sons 1260  
 From that dread strife, for grim the peril is,  
 And, for dread guerdon, tears shall be thy portion,  
 If thou of two sons be this day bereaved [Exit

JOCASTA

Daughter Antigone, come forth the house !  
 No dances, neither toils of maiden hands,  
 Beseem thee in this hour of heaven’s doom,  
 But heroes twain, yea, brethren unto thee,  
 Now deathward reeling, with thy mother thou  
 Must hold from dying, each by other slain

*Enter* ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE

Mother that bare me, what strange terror-cry 1270  
 Before these halls to thy friends utterest thou ?

JOCASTA

Daughter, thy brethren’s life is come to naught

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

πῶς εἶπας ,

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἰχμὴν ἐς μίαν καθέστατον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἱ ἄγῳ, τί λέξεις, μήτερ ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐ φίλ', ἀλλ' ἔπου

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῖ, παρθενῶνας ἐκλιπούς' ,

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἄνὰ στρατόν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

αἰδούμεθ' ὄχλον

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐκ ἐν αἰσχύνη τὰ σά

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δράσω δὲ δὴ τί ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί δρῶσα, μήτερ ,

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

προσπίτνουσ' ἐμοῦ μέτα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἡγοῦ σὺ πρὸς μεταίχμι', οὐ μελλητέον

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1280

ἔπειγ' ἔπειγε, θύγατερ· ὥς ἦν μὲν φθάσω  
παῖδας πρὸ λόγχης, οὐμὸς ἐν φάει βίος·  
θανοῦσι δ' αὐτοῖς συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι

# THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

How say'st thou ?

JOCASTA

Met they are for single fight

ANTIGONE

Woe ! what wilt say ?

JOCASTA

Naught welcome Follow me

ANTIGONE

Whither, from maiden-bowers ?

JOCASTA

Through the host

ANTIGONE

I shrink from throngs !

JOCASTA

No time for modesty this !

ANTIGONE

I—what can I do ?

JOCASTA

Part thy brethren's strife

ANTIGONE

Mother, whereby ?

JOCASTA

Fall at their feet with me

ANTIGONE

Lead to the mid-space ! We may tarry not

JOCASTA

Haste, daughter, haste · for, may I but forestall 1280  
My sons ere fighting, light of life is mine  
If they be dead, dead with them will I be [*Exeunt*

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,  
τρομερὰν φρίκα τρομερὰν φρέν' ἔχω·  
διὰ σάρκα δ' ἔμην  
ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε ματέρος δειλαίας.  
δίδυμα τέκεα πότερος ἄρα πότερον αἰμάξει—  
ἰὼ μοι πόνων,  
1290 ἰὼ Ζεῦ, ἰὼ γὰ—  
ὁμογενῇ δέραν, ὁμογενῇ ψυχὰν  
δι' ἀσπίδων, δι' αἱμάτων,  
τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα,  
πότερον ἄρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἀχρήσω;

ἀντ.

φεῦ δᾶ φεῦ δᾶ,  
δίδυμοι θῆρες, φόνιαι ψυχαὶ  
δορὶ παλλόμεναι  
πέσεα πέσεα δαί' αὐτίχ' αἰμάξετον  
1300 τάλανες, ὃ τι ποτὲ μονομάχον ἐπὶ φρέν' ἠλθέτην,  
βοᾶ βαρβάρῳ  
ἰαχὰν στενακτὰν  
μελομέναν νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω.  
σχεδὸν τύχα πέλας φόνου·  
κρινεῖ ξίφος<sup>1</sup> τὸ μέλλον  
ἀποτμος ἀποτμος ὁ φόνος ἔνεκ' Ἑρινύων

ἀλλὰ γὰρ Κρέοντα λεύσσω τόνδε δεῦρο συννεφῇ  
πρὸς δόμους στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας  
γόους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1310 οἴμοι, τί δράσω, πότερ' ἑμαυτὸν ἢ πόλιν  
στένω δακρύσας, ἣν πέριξ ἔχει νέφος

<sup>1</sup> Hermann for φάος of MSS

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

### CHORUS

(Str)

Alas and alas !  
 Shuddering, shuddering horror of soul have I  
 Through the very flesh of me pass  
 Compassion-thrills for a mother in misery [He—  
 Two sons—who, slain of the other, in blood shall  
 Woe, anguish, and dismay !  
 Zeus !—Earth !—to you I pray !— 1290  
 With his throat pierced, his life by a brother sped,  
 His shield cleft, and his blood by a brother shed ?  
 Woe's me and well-a-day !  
 For whom shall I uplift my voice to wail him dead ?

(Ant)

O land, O land !  
 Two ravening beasts, two spirits of murderous mood,  
 With the battle-lust quivering they stand,  
 But brother shall soon lay brother low in his blood !  
 Wretches, that ever on duel bent they stood ! 1300  
 With wail of alien tongue  
 Shall my wild dirge be sung,  
 Tears for the dead, and lamentation's cry  
 Fate presseth nearer, murder is hard by,  
 In the sward's balance hung —  
 Curst slaughter, curst, the work of Vengeance-destiny !

Ha, 'tis Creon I behold, that hitherward with clouded  
 brow [but now  
 Hasteth to the palace I will hush the wail begun  
*Enter CREON, with ATTENDANTS bearing the body of*

### MENOECUS

### CREON

What shall I do ? Weeping shall I bemoan 1310  
 Myself, or Thebes whom such a cloud o'erpalls

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1320 τοιούτον ὥστε δι' Ἀχέροντος ἰέναι ,  
 ἐμός τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὅλωλ' ὑπερθανών,  
 τοῦνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιάρων δ' ἐμοί·  
 ὃν ἄρτι κρημνῶν ἐκ δρακοντείων ἐλὼν  
 αὐτοσφαγῇ δύστηνος ἐκόμισ' ἐν χεροῖν,  
 βοᾷ δὲ δῶμα πᾶν· ἐγὼ δ' ἤκω μετὰ  
 γέρων ἀδελφὴν γραῖαν Ἰοκάστην, ὅπως  
 λούσῃ προθήται τ' οὐκέτ' ὄντα παῖδ' ἐμόν.  
 τοῖς γὰρ θανούσι χρή τὸν οὐ τεθνηκότα  
 τιμὰς διδόντα χθόνιον εὐσεβεῖν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκ' ἀδελφὴ σή, Κρέων, ἔξω δόμων  
 κόρη τε μητρὸς Ἀντιγόνη κοινῷ ποδί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ καπὶ ποῖαν συμφοράν, σήμεινέ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἤκουσε τέκνα μονομάχῳ μέλλειν δορὶ  
 εἰς ἀσπίδ' ἥξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὑπερ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς φῆς ; νέκυν τοι παιδὸς ἀγαπάζων ἐμοῦ  
 οὐκ εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον ὥστε καὶ τὰδ' εἰδέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1330 ἀλλ' οἴχεται μὲν σὴ κασιγνήτῃ πάλαι  
 δοκῶ δ' ἀγῶνα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, Κρέων,  
 ἥδη πεπράχθαι παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴμοι, τὸ μὲν σημεῖον εἰσορῶ τόδε,  
 σκυθρωπὸν ὄμμα καὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου  
 στείχοντος, ὃς πᾶν ἀγγελεῖ τὸ δρώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τίν' εἶπω μῦθον ἢ τίνας γόους ,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

As through the gloom of Acheïon drifts her now ?  
Dead is my son ! He died for fatherland,  
Winning a glorious name, but woe for me  
Him from the Dragon's clags but now I caught  
Self-slain, and woefully bare him in mine arms  
My whole house wails I for my sister come,  
Jocasta,—come, the old to seek the old,—  
To bathe and lay out this no more my son  
For he who hath not died must reverence  
The Nether-gods by honouring the dead 1320

### CHORUS

Gone is thy sister, Creon, forth the house ,  
And with her went her child Antigone

### CREON

Whither ?—for what mischance ? Declare to me

### CHORUS

The purpose of her sons she heard, to fight  
In single combat for the royal halls

### CREON

How sayest thou ? Lo, tending my son's corse,  
I came not to the knowledge of this deed.

### CHORUS

Yea, hence thy sister parted long ago .  
And that death-struggle, Creon, now, meseems, 1330  
Is ended 'twixt the sons of Oedipus

### CREON

Ah me ! a token yonder do I see,  
The joyless eye and face of one who comes  
A messenger, to tell all horrors done

*Enter* MESSENGER

### MESSENGER

Woe is me ! what story can I tell, or utter forth what  
wail ?

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰχόμεσθ' οὐκ εὐπροσώποις φροιμίους ἄρχει  
λόγου.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τάλας, δισσως αὐτῷ μεγάλα γὰρ φέρω κακά

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πρὸς πεπραγμένοισιν ἄλλοις πῆμασιν; λέγεις  
δὲ τί,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ σῆς ἀδελφῆς παῖδες ἐν φάει, Κρέον

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1340 αἰαῖ

μεγάλα μοι θροεῖς πάθεα καὶ πόλει.  
ὦ δώματ' εἰσηκούσατ' Οἰδίπουν τάδε  
παίδων ὁμοίαις συμφοραῖς ὀλωλότων,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥστ' ἂν δακρῦσαί γ', εἰ φρονοῦντ' ἐτύγχανεν

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴμοι ξυμφορᾶς βαρυποτμωτάτας,  
οἴμοι κακῶν δύστηνος ὦ τάλας ἐγώ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

εἰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοισί γ' εἰδείης κακά

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν τῶνδε δυσποτμώτερα;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τέθνηκ' ἀδελφή σὴ δυοῖν παῖδοιν μέτα

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1350 ἀνάγετ' ἀνάγετε κωκυτόν,  
ἐπὶ κᾶρα τε λευκοπήχεις κτύπους χεροῖν,



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Ah, undone ! With no fair-seeming prelude thou be-  
ginn'st thy tale

MESSENGER

Woe ! Again I cry it, for I bring a burden of  
dismay—

CREON

Heaped upon calamities already wrought ? What  
wouldst thou say ?

MESSENGER

Creon, those thy sister's sons behold no more the light  
of day

CREON

Alas !

1340

Terrible ills for me and for Thebes dost thou tell—  
O halls of Oedipus, have ye heard this ?—  
Dost tell of sons that by one doom have died !

CHORUS

Their very walls might weep, could they but know

CREON

Woe's me, the disaster, when fate's stroke heavily fell !  
Woe for my sorrows ! Ah unhappy I !

MESSENGER

Ah, didst thou know the evils more than these !

CREON

What can be more calamitous than these ?

MESSENGER

Dead is thy sister—dead with her two sons

CHORUS

Upraise, upraise the lamentation-strain,  
Down on the head let blows of white hands rain !

1350

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ τλήμων, οἶον τέρμον', Ἰοκάστη, βίου  
γάμων τε τῶν σῶν Σφιγγὸς αἰνιγμοῖς ἔτλης.  
πῶς καὶ πέπρακται διπτύχων παίδων φόνος  
ἀρᾶς τ' ἀγώνισμ' Οἰδίπου; σήμαινέ μοι.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- τὰ μὲν πρὸ πύργων εὐτυχήματα χθονὸς  
οἶσθ' οὐ μακρὰν γὰρ τειχέων περιπτυχαί.  
[ὥστ' οὐχ ἅπαντ' αἶψ' εἰδέναι τὰ δρώμενα.]  
ἐπεὶ δὲ χαλκίοις σῶμ' ἐκοσμήσανθ' ὅπλοις  
1360 οἱ τοῦ γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανίαι,  
ἔστησαν ἐλθόντ' εἰς μέσον μεταίχμιον  
[δισσὴν στρατηγὴν καὶ διπλὴν στρατηλάτην]  
ὥς εἰς ἀγῶνα μονομάχου τ' ἄλκην δορός.  
βλέψας δ' ἐς Ἄργος ἦκε Πολυνείκης ἀράς·  
ὦ πότνι' Ἥρα, σὸς γὰρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις  
ἔξευξ' Ἀδράστου παῖδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα,  
δὸς μοι κτανεῖν ἀδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμὴν  
καθαιματῶσαι δεξιὰν νικηφόρον·  
[αἰσχιστον αἰτῶν στέφανον, ὁμογενὴ κτανεῖν.  
1370 πολλοῖς δ' ἐπῆει δάκρυα τῆς τύχης ὄση,  
καῖβλεψαν ἀλλήλοισι διαδόντες κόρας]  
Ἔτεοκλῆς δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσάσπιδος  
βλέψας πρὸς οἶκον ἠΐξ'· ὦ Διὸς κόρη,  
δὸς ἔγχος ἡμῖν καλλίνικον ἐκ χερὸς  
εἰς στέρν' ἀδελφοῦ τῆσδ' ἀπ' ὠλένης βαλεῖν,  
κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμὴν.  
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀφείθη πυρσὸς ὥς Τυρσηνικῆς  
σάλπιγγος ἡχή, σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,  
ἦξαν δρόμημα δεινὸν ἀλλήλοισι ἔπι·  
1380 κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαν γένυν  
ξυνήψαν, ἀφρῶ διάβροχοι γενειάδας

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Hapless Jocasta, what an end of life  
And marriage hast thou proved the Sphinx's riddle !  
How came to pass the death of her two sons,  
The strife, of Oedipus' curse that came ?—declare

MESSENGER

The land's fair fortune in her towers' defence  
Thou know'st the girdling walls be not so far  
But that thou mayest know whate'er is done  
Now when in brazen mail they had clad their limbs,  
Those princes, sons of ancient Oedipus, 1360  
Into the mid-space went they forth and stood,  
Those chieftains two, those battle-leaders twain,  
As for the grapple and strife of single fight

Then, gazing Argos-ward, Polyneices prayed  
“ Queen Hera,—for thine am I since I wed  
Adrastus' child, and dwell within thy land,—  
Grant me to slay my brother, and to stain  
My warring hand with blood of victory ! ”—  
Asking a crown of shame, to slay a brother  
Tears sprang from many an eye at that dread fate, 1370  
And each on other did men look askance  
But unto golden-shielded Pallas' fane  
Eteocles looked, and prayed “ Daughter of Zeus,  
Grant that the conquering spear, of mine hand sped,  
Yea, from this arm, may smite my brother's breast,  
And slay him who hath come to waste my land ! ”

Then, when the Tuscan trump, like signal-trump,  
Rang forth the token of the bloody fray,  
Forth darted each at other in terrible rush,  
And, like wild boars that whet the tameless tusk, 1380  
Clashed they, foam-flakes beslaving their beards

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἦσσαν δὲ λόγχαις· ἀλλ' ὑφίζανον κύκλοις,  
 ὅπως σίδηρος ἐξολισθάνοι μάτην  
 εἰ δ' ὅμμ' ὑπερσχὸν Ἴτυος ἄτερος μάθοι,  
 λόγχην ἐνώμα, στόματι προφθῆναι θέλων  
 ἀλλ' εὖ προσῆγον ἀσπίδων κεγχρώμασιν  
 ὀφθαλμόν, ἀργὸν ὥστε γίγνεσθαι δόρυ  
 πᾶσιν δὲ τοῖς ὀρώσιν ἐστάλασσ' ἰδρώς  
 ἢ τοῖσι δρώσι, διὰ φίλων ὀρρωδῖαν  
 1390 Ἐτεοκλῆς δὲ ποδὶ μεταψαίρων πέτρον  
 ἔχρους ὑπόδρομον, κῶλον ἐκτὸς ἀσπίδος  
 τίθησι· Πολυνείκης δ' ἀπήντησεν δορί,  
 πληγὴν σιδήρῳ παραδοθεῖσαν εἰσιδὼν,  
 κνήμης τε διεπέρασεν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ·  
 στρατὸς δ' ἀνηλάλαξε Δαναιδῶν ἅπας.  
 καὶ τῷδε μόχθῳ γυμνὸν ὦμον εἰσιδὼν  
 ὁ πρόσθε τρωθεὶς στέρνα Πολυνείκους βία  
 διήκε λόγχην, καπέδωκεν ἡδονὰς  
 1400 Κάδμου πολίταις, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθραυσ' ἄκρον δόρυ.  
 εἰς δ' ἄπορον ἦκων δορὸς ἐπὶ σκέλος πάλιν  
 χωρεῖ, λαβὼν δ' ἀφῆκε μάρμαρον πέτρον,  
 μέσον δ' ἄκοντ' ἔθραυσεν· ἐξ ἴσου δ' Ἀρης  
 ἦν, κάμακος ἀμφοῖν χεῖρ' ἀπεστερημένοι  
 ἔνθεν δὲ κώπας ἀρπάσαντε φασγάνων  
 ἐς ταῦτόν ἦκον, συμβαλόντε δ' ἀσπίδας  
 πολλὴν ταραγμὸν ἀμφιβάντ' εἶχον μάχης.  
 καὶ πῶς νοήσας Ἐτεοκλῆς τὸ Θεσσαλον  
 εἰσήγαγεν σόφισμ' ὀμιλία χθονός·  
 1410 ἐξαλλαγεὶς γάρ τοῦ παρεστῶτος πόνου,  
 λαιὸν μὲν εἰς τοῦπισθεν ἀμφέρει πόδα,  
 πρόσω τὰ κοῖλα γαστρὸς εὐλαβούμενος·  
 προβὰς δὲ κῶλον δεξιὸν δι' ὀμφαλοῦ  
 καθήκεν ἔγχος σφονδύλοις τ' ἐνῆρμοσεν.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

With spears they lunged yet crouched behind their  
shields,  
That so the steel might bootless glance aside  
And, if one saw foe's eye peer o'er the targe,  
Aye thrust he, fain to overreach his fence  
Yet cunningly through eyelets of their shields  
They glanced, that naught awhile the spear achieved,  
While more from all beholders trickled sweat,  
Of fear for friends, than from the champions' selves  
But Eteocles, spurning aside a stone 1390  
That rolled beneath his tread, without his shield  
Showed glimpse of fenceless limb Polyneices lunged,  
Marking the stroke so offered to the steel,  
And through the shank clear passed the Argive lance  
Loud cheered the whole array of Danaus' sons  
But his foe's shoulder by that effort bared  
The stricken marked, and Polyneices' breast  
Pierced with a strong spear-thrust, and gave back joy  
To Cadmus' folk, yet brake his spear-head-short  
So, his lance lost, back fell he step by step, 1400  
Caught up a rugged rock, and sped its flight,  
Snapping his foe's spear thwart Now was the fray  
Equal, since either's hand was spear-bereft  
Thereupon snatched they at their falchion-hilts,  
Closed, clashing shields, and, traversing to and fro,  
Made rage the stormy clangour of the fight  
But, having learnt it visiting Thessaly,  
Eteocles used the northern warriors' feint  
For, from the instant grapple springing clear,  
Back on his left foot, backward still, he sinks, 1410  
Watching the while his foe's waist leaping then,  
The right foot foremost, through the navel plunged  
His sword, and 'twixt the spine-bones wedged the  
point

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ὁμοῦ δὲ κάμψας πλευρὰ καὶ νηδὺν τάλας  
 σὺν αἵματηραῖς σταγόσι Πολυνείκης πίτνει  
 ὁ δ', ὡς κρατῶν δὴ καὶ νενικηκῶς μάχη,  
 ξίφος δικῶν εἰς γαῖαν ἐσκύλευέ νιν,  
 τὸν νοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔχων, ἐκείσε δέ·  
 1420 δ' καὶ νιν ἔσφηλ'. ἔτι γὰρ ἐμπνέων βραχύ,  
 σφάζων σίδηρον ἐν λυγρῷ πεσήμετι,  
 μόλις μέν, ἐξέτεινε δ' εἰς ἡπαρ ξίφος  
 Ἑτεοκλέους ὁ πρόσθε Πολυνείκης πεσών.  
 γαῖαν δ' ὁδᾶξ ἐλόντες ἀλλήλων πέλας  
 πίπτουσιν ἄμφω κοῦ διώρισαν κράτος.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, κακῶν σῶν, Οἰδίπου, σ' ὅσων στένω·  
 τὰς σὰς δ' ἀρὰς ἔοικεν ἐκπλήσσαι θεός.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοις κακά.  
 ὡς γὰρ τέκνω πεσόντ' ἐλειπέτην βίον,  
 ἐν τῷδε μήτηρ ἢ τάλαινα προσπίτνει  
 1430 σὺν παρθένῳ τε καὶ προθυμῇ ποδός.  
 τετρωμένους δ' ἰδοῦσα καιρίους σφαγὰς  
 ὤμωξεν ὦ τέκν', ὑστέρα βοηδρόμος  
 πᾶρειμι προσπίτνουσα δ' ἐν μέρει τέκνα  
 ἔκλαι', ἐθρήνει τὸν πολὺν μάτην πόνον  
 στένουσ', ἀδελφὴ θ' ἢ παρασπίζουσ' ὁμοῦ  
 ὦ γηροβοσκῶ μητρός, ὦ γάμους ἐμοὺς  
 1440 προδόντ' ἀδελφῶ φιλτάτῳ. στέρνων δ' ἄπο  
 φύσημ' ἀνεὶς δύσθνητον Ἑτεοκλῆς ἀναξ  
 ἤκουσε μητρός, κάπιθεις ὑγρὰν χέρα  
 φωνὴν μὲν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν, ὁμμάτων δ' ἄπο  
 προσεῖπε δακρύοις, ὥστε σημήναι φίλα.  
 ὁ δ' ἦν ἔτ' ἐμπνους, πρὸς κασιγνήτην δ' ἰδὼν  
 γραιῖαν τε μητέρ' εἶπε Πολυνείκης τάδε·

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Then, ribs and belly marched in anguish-throe,  
Down-raining blood-gouts, Polyneices falls  
Our king, as victor, winner of the fight,  
Casting his sword down, fell to spoiling him,  
Heeding but that, nor recking his own risk,  
Which thing undid him Faintly breathing yet,  
Still grasping in his grievous fall his sword, 20  
First-fallen Polyneices with hard strain  
Plunged into Eteocles' heart the blade  
Gnashing in dust then teeth, there side by side  
They lie, those twain, the victory doubtful still

### CHORUS

Alas ! I wail thy sore griefs, Oedipus !  
Thy malisons, I wot, hath God fulfilled

### MESSENGER

Ah, but hear now what woes remain to tell.  
Even as her fallen sons were leaving life,  
Their wretched mother rusheth on the scene,—  
She and the maid, with haste of eager feet , 1430  
And, seeing them stricken with their mortal wounds,  
She wailed, “ Ah sons, too late for help I come ! ”

Then, falling on her sons, on each in turn,  
She wept, she wailed, her long vain nursing-toil  
Bemoaning and their sister at her side—  
“ Props of your mother's age, dear brethren, who  
Leave me a bride unwed ! ” One dying gasp  
Hard-heaving from his breast, King Eteocles  
His mother heard, touched her with clammy hand,  
Uttered no word, but from his eyes he spake 1440  
With tears, as giving token of his love.  
But Polyneices breathing yet, and gazing  
On sister and on aged mother, spake

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀπωλόμεσθα, μήτερ· οἰκτείρω δὲ σέ  
 καὶ τήνδ' ἀδελφὴν καὶ κασίγνητον νεκρόν  
 φίλος γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.  
 θάψον δέ μ', ὦ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σύ, σύγγονε,  
 ἐν γῇ πατρώα, καὶ πόλιν θυμουμένην  
 παρηγορεῖτον, ὥς τοσόνδε γοῦν τύχῳ  
 1450 χθονὸς πατρώας, κεῖ δόμους ἀπώλεσα.  
 ξυνάρμοσον δὲ βλέφαρά μου τῇ σῇ χειρί,  
 μήτερ — τίθησι δ' αὐτὸς ὀμμάτων ἔπι —  
 καὶ χαίρετ'· ἤδη γάρ με περιβάλλει σκότος.  
 ἄμφω δ' ἄμ' ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βίον  
 μήτηρ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῖδε τήνδε συμφοράν,  
 ὑπερπαθήσας ἥρπας' ἐκ νεκρῶν ξίφος  
 κᾶπραξε δεινὰ διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος  
 ὠθεῖ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις  
 1460 θανοῦσα κεῖται περιβαλοῦσ' ἄμφοιν χέρας.  
 ἀνῆξε δ' ὀρθὸς λαὸς εἰς ἔριν λόγων,  
 ἡμεῖς μὲν ὥς νικῶντα δεσπότην ἐμόν,  
 οἱ δ' ὥς ἐκείνον ἦν δ' ἔρις στρατηλάταις,  
 οἱ μὲν πατάξαι πρόσθε Πολυνεΐκην δορί,  
 οἱ δ' ὥς θανόντων οὐδαμοῦ νίκη πέλοι.  
 κὰν τῷδ' ὑπεξῆλθ' Ἀντιγόνη στρατοῦ δίχα.  
 οἱ δ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἦσσαν εὐ δὲ πῶς προμηθία  
 καθῆστο Κᾶδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἔπι  
 κᾶφθμεν οὐπω τεύχεσιν πεφραγμένον  
 Ἀργεῖον εἰσπεσόντες ἐξαίφνης στρατόν  
 1470 κοῦδεις ὑπέστη, πεδία δ' ἐξεπίμπλασαν  
 φεύγοντες, ἔρρει δ' αἷμα μυρίων νεκρῶν  
 λόγχαις πιτνόντων. ὥς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,  
 οἱ μὲν Διὸς τροπαῖον ἴστασαν βρέτας,  
 οἱ δ' ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργείων νεκρῶν  
 σκυλεύματ' εἴσω τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

“Mother, our death is this I pity thee,  
And thee, my sister, and my brother dead  
Loved, he became my foe but loved—yet loved !  
Bury me, mother, and thou, sister mine,  
In native soil, and our chafed city’s wrath  
Appease ye, that I win thus much at least  
Of fatherland, though I have lost mine home 1450  
And close thou up mine eyelids with thine hand,  
Mother, ”—himself on his eyes layeth it—  
“And fare ye well the darkness wraps me round ”  
So both together breathed their sad life forth

And when the mother saw this woeful chance,  
Grief-frenzied, from the dead she snatched a sword,  
And wrought a horror for through her mid-neck  
She drives the steel, and with her best-beloved  
Lies dead, embracing with her arms the twain  
Leapt to their feet the hosts with wrangling cries,— 1460  
We shouting that our lord was conqueror,  
They, theirs And strife there was between the  
chiefs,  
These crying, “First smote Polyneices’ spear !”  
Those, “Both be dead with none the victory rests !”  
Antigone from the field had stol’n the while

Then rushed the foe to arms but Cadmus’ folk  
By happy forethought under shield had halted ,  
So we forestalled the Argive host, and fell  
Suddenly on them yet unfenced for fight  
Was none withstood us huddled o’er the plain 1470  
Fled they, and streamed the blood from slain untold  
By spears laid low So, victors in the fight,  
Our triumph-trophy some ’gan rear to Zeus ;  
And, some from Argive corpses stripping shields,  
Within our battlements the spoils we sent

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἄλλοι δὲ τοὺς θανόντας Ἀντιγόνης μέτα  
νεκροὺς φέρουσιν ἐνθάδ' οἰκτίσαι φίλοις.  
πόλει δ' ἀγῶνες οἱ μὲν εὐτυχέστατοι  
τῇδ' ἐξέβησαν, οἱ δὲ δυστυχέστατοι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

1480 οὐκ εἰς ἀκοὰς ἔτι δυστυχία  
δώματος ἦκει· πάρα γὰρ λεύσσειν  
πτώματα νεκρῶν τρισσῶν ἤδη  
τάδε πρὸς μελάθροισιν κοινῶι θανάτῳ  
σκοτίαν αἰῶνα λαχόντων.

### ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ προκαλυπτομένα βοτρυχώδεος  
ἄβρὰ παρηίδος οὐδ' ὑπὸ  
παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάροισιν  
φοῖνικ', ἐρύθημα προσώπου,  
αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκύων,  
1490 κράδεμνα δικούσα κόμας ἀπ' ἐμᾶς,  
στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνείσα τρυφάν,  
ἀγεμόνευμα νεκροῖσιν πολύστονον. αἰαῖ, ἰὼ μοι.  
ὦ Πολύνεικες, ἔφυς ἄρ' ἐπώνυμος, ὦ μοι, Θῆβαι  
σὰ δ' ἔρις οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνος φόνος  
Οἰδιπόδα δόμον ὤλεσε κρανθεὶς  
αἵματι δεινῷ, αἵματι λυγρῷ.  
τίνα προσφδὸν  
ἦ τίνα μουσοπόλον στοναχὰν ἐπὶ  
1500 δάκρυσιν δάκρυσιν, ὦ δόμος ὦ δόμος,  
ἀγκαλέσωμαι,  
τρισσὰ φέρουσα τάδε σώματα σύγγονα,  
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ' Ἑρινύος ;

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And others with Antigone bear on  
The dead twain hither for their friends to mourn  
So hath the strife had end for Thebes in part  
Most happily, in part most haplessly

### CHORUS

Not a grief for the hearing alone 1480  
Is the bale of the house ye may see  
Here, now, yon corpses thence  
By the palace, in death as one  
To the life that is darkness gone.

*Enter procession bearing corpses, with CREON and*  
ANTIGONE

### ANTIGONE

Never a veil o'er the tresses I threw  
O'er my soft cheek sweeping,  
Nor for maidenhood's shunning I hid from view  
The hot blood leaping  
'Neath mine eyes, when I rushed in the bacchanal  
dance for the dead, [head,  
When I cast on the earth the tiring that bound mine 1490  
Loose flinging my bright robe saffron of hue—  
I, by whom corpses with wailing are graveward led  
Polyneices, "the man of much strife"—well named!  
Woe's me!

No strife was thy strife it was murder by murder  
brought [fright  
To accomplishment, run to Oedipus' house, and  
With bloodshed of horror, with bloodshed of misery

On what bard shall I call?

What harper of dirges shall I bid come  
To wail the lament,—O home, mine home!— 1500 \*

While the tears, the tears fall,  
As I bear three bodies of kindred slain,  
Mother and sons, while the Fiend gloats over our woe

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἂ δόμον Οἰδιπόδα πρόπαν ὤλεσε,  
τᾶς ἀγρίας ὅτε  
δυσξύνετον ξυνετὸς μέλος ἔγνω  
Σφιγγὸς ἀοιδοῦ σῶμα φονεύσας.  
ἰὼ μοι, πάτερ,  
τίς Ἑλλὰς ἢ βάρβαρος ἢ  
1510 τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετῶν ἕτερος  
ἔτλα κακῶν τοσῶνδ'  
αἵματος ἀμερίου  
τοιιάδ' ἄχρα φανερὰ ,  
  
τάλαιν', ὥς ἐλελίζει.  
τίς ἄρ' ὄρνις ἢ δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας  
ἀκροκόμοις ἀμφὶ κλάδοις  
ἐξομένα μονομάτορος ὀδυρμοῖς  
ἐμοῖς ἄχεσι συνωδός ,  
αἴλινον αἰάγμασιν ἂ  
1520 τοῖσδε προκλαίῳ μονάδ' αἰῶνα  
διάξουσα τὸν αἰὲ χρόνον ἐν  
λειβομένοισιν δακρύοισιν  
  
τίν' ἰαχήσω ;  
τίν' ἐπὶ πρῶτον ἀπὸ χαίτας  
σπαραγμοῖς ἀπαρχὰς βάλω ;  
ματρὸς ἐμᾶς διδύ-  
μοισι γάλακτος παρὰ μαστοῖς,  
ἢ πρὸς ἀδελφῶν  
οὐλόμεν' αἰκίσματα νεκρῶν ;  
  
• 1530 ὅτοτοτοῖ· λείπε σους δόμους,  
ἀλαδὸν ὄμμα φέρων,  
πάτερ γεραιέ, δεῖξον,  
Οἰδιπόδα, σὸν αἰῶνα μέλεον, ὃς ἐπὶ

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Who brought in ruin the house of Oedipus low,  
In the day when the Songstress Sphinx's strain,  
So hard to read, by his wisdom was read,  
And the fierce shape down unto death was sped ?  
    Woe for me, father mine !  
    Who hath borne griefs like unto thine ?  
What Hellene, or alien, or who that spiang      1510  
Of the ancient blood of a high-born line,  
Whose race in a day is run, hath endured in the sight  
of the sun  
    Such bitter pang ?

Woe's me for my dirge wild-ringing !  
What song-bird that rocketh on high,  
Mid the boughs of the oak-tree swinging,  
Or the pine-tree, will echo my cry,  
The moans of the motherless maiden,  
Who wail for the life without friend      1520  
I must know, who shall weep sorrow-laden  
Tears without end ?

Over whom shall I make lamentation ?  
Unto whom with rendings of hair  
Shall I first give sorrow's oblation ?  
Shall I cast them, mine offerings, there  
Where the twin breasts are of my mother,  
Where a suckling babe I have lain,  
Or on ghastliest wounds of a brother  
    Cruelly slain ?

Come forth of thy chambers, blind father ,      1530  
Ancient, thy sorrows lay bare,  
Who didst cause mist-darkness to gather  
On thine own eyes, thou who dost wear

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δώμασιν ἀέριον σκότον ὄμμασι  
 σοῖσι βαλὼν ἔλκεις μακρόπνουν ζῶαν.  
 κλύεις, ὦ κατ' αὐλὰν ἀλαίνων γεραιὸν  
 πόδα δεμνίοις  
 δύστανος ἰαύων ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

τί μ', ὦ παρθένε, βακτρεύμασι τυ-  
 1540 φλοῦ ποδὸς ἐξάγαγες εἰς φῶς  
 λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων  
 οἰκτροτάτοισιν δακρύοισιν,  
 πολὺν αἰθέρος ἀφανὲς εἶδωλον ἧ  
 νέκυν ἔνερθεν ἧ  
 πτανὸν ὄνειρον ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δυστυχὲς ἀγγελίας ἔπος οἴσει  
 πάτερ, οὐκέτι σοι τέκνα λεύσσει  
 φάος οὐδ' ἄλοχος, παραβάκτροις  
 ἀ πόδα σὸν τυφλόπουν θεραπεύμασιν αἰὲν ἐμόχθει,  
 1550 ὦ πάτερ, ὦμοι

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦμοι ἐμῶν παθέων πάρα γὰρ στενάχειν τάδ',  
 αὐτεῖν.  
 τρισσαὶ ψυχὰι ποίᾳ μοίρᾳ  
 πῶς ἔλιπον φάος , ὦ τέκνον, αὔδα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἐπ' ὀνείδεσιν οὐδ' ἐπιχάρμασιν,  
 ἀλλ' ὀδύναισι λέγω· σὸς ἀλάστωρ  
 ξίφεσιν βρίθων  
 καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλίσαισι μάχαις ἐπὶ παῖδας ἔβα  
 σοὺς,  
 ὦ πάτερ, ὦμοι.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Weariful days out O hearken,  
Whose old feet grope through the hall,  
Who in gloom that no night-tide can darken  
On thy pallet dost fall

*Enter OEDIPUS*

OEDIPUS

Why hast thou drawn me, my child, to the light,  
Whose sightless hand to thine hand's prop clings, 1540  
Who was bowed on my bed amid chambers of night,—  
Hast drawn by a wail through tears that rings,—  
A white-haired shape, like a phantom that fades  
On the sight, or a ghost from the underworld shades,  
Or a dream that hath wings?

ANTIGONE

Woe is the word of my tidings to thee!  
Father, thy sons behold no more  
The light, nor thy wife, who aye upbore  
Thy blind limbs tirelessly, tenderly,  
O father, ah me! 1550

OEDIPUS

Ah me for my woes! Full well may I shriek, full  
well may I moan!  
By what doom have the spirits of these three  
flown  
From the light of life? O child, make known

ANTIGONE

Not as reproaching, nor mocking, I tell,  
But in anguish Thy curse, with its vengeance of  
hell,  
With swords laden, and fire,  
And ruthless contention, on thy sons fell  
Woe's me, my sue!

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

αἰαί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1560 τί τάδε καταστένεις ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

τέκνα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας·

εἰ δὲ τὰ τέθριππά γ' ἐς ἄρματα λεύσσω

αἰέλιου τάδε σώματα νεκρῶν

ὄμματος αὐγαῖς σαῖς ἐπενώμας

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

τῶν μὲν ἐμῶν τεκέων φανερόν κακόν

ἀ δὲ τάλαιν' ἄλοχος τίνι μοι, τέκνον, ὄλετο

μοίρα ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δάκρυα γοερὰ φανερὰ πᾶσι τιθεμένα,

τέκεσι μαστὸν

ἔφερεν ἔφερεν ἱκέτις ἱκέτιν ὀρομένα

1570 ἦὑρε δ' ἐν Ἡλέκτραισι πύλαις τέκνα

λωτοτρόφον κατὰ λείμακα

λόγχαις κοινὸν ἐνυάλιον

μάτηρ, ὥστε λέοντας ἐναύλους,

μαρναμένους ἐπὶ τραύμασιν, αἵματος

ἤδη ψυχρὰν λοιβὰν φονίαν,

ἂν ἔλαχ' Ἀιδας, ὥπασε δ' Ἀρης·

χαλκόκροτον δὲ λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον

εἶσω

σαρκὸς ἔβαψεν, ἄχει δὲ τέκνων ἔπεσ' ἀμφὶ

τέκνοισιν.

πάντα δ' ἐν ἄματι τῷδε συνάγαγεν,

1580 ὦ πάτερ, ἀμετέροισι δόμοισιν ἄχῃ θεὸς

ὃς τάδε τελευτᾷ



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Alas for me !

ANTIGONE

Wherefore thy deep-drawn sigh ? 1560

OEDIPUS

For my children !

ANTIGONE

Thine hath been agony —

But oh, to the Sun-god's car couldst thou raise

Thine eyes, couldst thou on these bodies gaze,

Dead where they lie !

OEDIPUS

For the evil fate of my sons, it is all too plain !

But ah, mine unhappiest wife !—by what doom, O  
my child, was she slain ?

ANTIGONE

Weeping and wailing, that all of her coming were ware,  
Hasted she Unto her children she bare, O she bare  
Sacredst breasts of a mother with suppliant prayer

And she found her sons at Electra's portal, 1570

In the mead with the clover fair,

Closing with spears in the combat mortal

As lions that strive in their lair

They grappled, with falchions ruthless-gashing

Yea, now the oblation of death fell plashing

Which Ares giveth when Hades the spoil will share

And she snatched from the dead, and the bronze-

hammered blade through her bosom she thrust,

And in grief for her children, enclasping her children,  
she fell in the dust

Lo, all the griefs of our line, one marshalled array,  
Have been gathered, O father, against our house 1580  
this day [ment lay

Of the God in whose hands their accomplish-

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν κακῶν κατήρξεν Οἰδίπου δόμοις  
τόδ' ἡμαρ· εἴη δ' εὐτυχέστερος βίος

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴκτων μὲν ἤδη λήγεθ', ὥς ὦρα τάφου  
μνήμην τίθεσθαι· τῶνδε δ', Οἰδίπου, λόγων  
ἄκουσον· ἀρχὰς τῆσδε γῆς ἔδωκέ μοι  
'Ετεοκλῆς παῖς σός, γάμων φερνὰς διδοὺς  
Αἴμονι κόρης τε λέκτρον Ἀντιγόνης σέθεν.  
οὐκ οὖν σ' ἐάσω τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι·  
1590 σαφῶς γὰρ εἶπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μὴ ποτε  
σοῦ τήνδε γῆν οἰκοῦντος εὖ πράξειν πόλιν  
ἀλλ' ἐκκομίζου. καὶ τάδ' οὐχ ὕβρει λέγω  
οὐδ' ἐχθρὸς ὢν σός, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας  
τοὺς σοὺς δεδοικῶς μὴ τι γῇ· πάθῃ κακόν.

## ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦ μοῖρ', ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὥς μ' ἔφυσας ἄθλιον  
καὶ τλήμον', εἴ τις ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων ἔφν·  
δν καὶ πρὶν εἰς φῶς μητρὸς ἐκ γονῆς μολεῖν,  
ἄγονον Ἀπόλλων Λαίῳ μ' ἐθέσπισε  
φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.  
1600 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγενόμην, αὐτὸς ὁ σπείρας πατὴρ  
κτείνει με νομίσας πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·  
χρὴν γὰρ θανεῖν νιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ· πέμπει δέ με  
μαστὸν ποθοῦντα θηρσὶν ἄθλιον βοράν·  
οὐ σφζόμεσθα Ταρτάρου γὰρ ὥφελεν  
ἐλθεῖν Κιθαιρῶν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,  
ὅς μ' οὐ διώλεσ', ἀλλὰ δουλεῦσαί γέ μοι  
δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην  
κτανῶν δ' ἐμαυτοῦ πατέρ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγὼ  
1610 εἰς μητρὸς ἦλθον τῆς τάλαιπώρου λέχος,  
παιδῆς τ' ἀδελφούς ἔτεκον, οὓς ἀπώλεσα,

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

### CHORUS

Many an ill to Oedipus' house this day  
Brings forth    May happier life be yet in store !

### CREON

Refrain laments · time is it we gave heed  
To burial    Unto these words, Oedipus,  
Hearken    thy son Eteocles gave me rule  
O'er this land, making it a marriage-dower  
To Haemon with thy child Antigone  
Therefore thou mayest dwell therein no more ;  
For plainly spake Teiresias—never Thebes    1590  
Shall prosper while thou dwellest in the land  
Then get thee forth    this not despiteously  
I speak, nor as thy foe, but fearing hurt  
To Thebes by reason of thy vengeance-fiends

### OEDIPUS

Fate, from the first to grief thou barest me,  
And pain, beyond all men that ever were  
Ere from my mother's womb I came to light,  
Phoebus to Laus spake me, yet unborn,  
My father's murderer—ah, woe is me !  
When I was born, my father, my begetter,—    1600  
Doomed by mine hand to die,—accounting me  
From birth his foe, would slay me, sent me forth,  
A suckling yet, a wretched prey to beasts

Yet was I saved    Oh had Cithaeron sunk  
Down to the bottomless chasms of Tartarus,  
For that it slew me not !—but Fate gave me  
To be a bondman, Polybus my lord.  
So mine own father did I slay, and came,—  
Ah wretch !—unto mine hapless mother's couch.  
Sons I begat, my brethren, and destroyed,    1610

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀρὰς παραλαβὼν Λαίου καὶ παισι δούς  
οὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀσύνετος πέφυκ' ἐγὼ  
ὥστ' εἰς ἔμ' ὄμματ' εἰς τ' ἐμῶν παίδων βίον  
ἄνευ θεῶν τοῦ ταῦτ' ἐμνηχανησάμην  
εἶεν τί δράσω δῆθ' ὃ δυσδαίμων ἐγώ ,  
τίς ἡγεμών μοι ποδὸς ὁμαρτήσῃ τυφλοῦ ;  
ἦδ' ἢ θανοῦσα , ζῶσά γ' ἂν σάφ' οἶδ' ὅτι.  
ἀλλ' εὐτεκνος ξυνωρίς ; ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι μοι.  
ἀλλ' ἔτι νεάζων αὐτὸς εὐροιμ' ἂν βίον ,  
1620 πόθεν , τί μ' ἄρδην ὧδ' ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον ;  
ἀποκτενεῖς γάρ, εἰ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς  
οὐ μὴν ἐλίξας γ' ἀμφὶ σὸν χεῖρας γόνυ  
κακὸς φανούμαι τὸ γὰρ ἐμόν ποτ' εὐγενὲς  
οὐκ ἂν προδοίην, οὐδέ περ πράσσω κακῶς

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

σοί τ' εὖ λέλεκται γόνατα μὴ χρῶζῃν ἐμά,  
ἐγὼ τε ναίειν σ' οὐκ ἐάσαιμ' ἂν χθόνα.  
νεκρῶν δὲ τῶνδε τὸν μὲν εἰς δόμους χρεῶν  
ἦδη κομίζειν, τόνδε δ', ὃς πέρσων πόλιν  
1630 πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἦλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκυν  
ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῇσδ' ὄρων ἔξω χθονός  
κηρύσσεται δὲ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε,  
ὃς ἂν νεκρὸν τόνδ' ἢ καταστέφω ἀλφῇ  
ἢ γῇ καλύπτω, θάνατον ἀνταλλάσσεται.  
ἐὰν δ' ἄκλαυστον, ἄταφον, οἰωνοῖς βοράν  
σὺ δ' ἐκλιποῦσα τριπτύχων θρήνους νεκρῶν  
κόμιζε σαυτήν, Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων ἔσω,  
καὶ παρθενεύου τὴν ἰοῦσαν ἡμέραν  
μένουσ' ἐν ᾗ σε λέκτρον Αἴμονος μένει

## ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ἐν οἷσις κείμεθ' ἄθλιοι κακοῖς  
1640 ὥς σε στενάζω τῶν τεθνηκότων πλέον·

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Passing to them the curse of Laus  
For not so witless am I from the birth,  
As to devise these things against mine eyes  
And my sons' life, but by the finger of God  
Let be —what shall I do, the fortune-crost?  
Who shall companion me, my blind steps guide?  
She who is dead? O yea, were she alive!  
My sons, a goodly pair? Nay, I have none  
Am I yet young, to win me livelihood?  
Whence? Wherefore, Creon, slay me utterly? 1620  
For thou wilt slay, if forth the land thou cast  
Yet never twining round thy knee mine hands  
A coward will I show me, to betray  
My noble birth, how ill soe'er I fare

### CREON

Well hast thou said thou wilt not clasp my knees  
I cannot let thee dwell within the land  
Of these dead twain, be this within the halls  
Borne straightway that—the corpse of him who  
came  
With aliens to smite his father's city—  
Forth of the land's bounds tombless shall be cast 1630  
To all Cadmeans shall this be proclaimed —  
“Whoso on this corpse laying wreaths is found,  
Or with earth hiding, death shall be his meed  
Unwept, unburied, leave him meat for birds”  
But thou thy mourning for the corpses three,  
Antigone, leave, and get thee within doors  
Thy maiden state until the morrow keep,  
Whereon the couch of Haemon waiteth thee

### ANTIGONE

Father, in what ills is our misery whelmed!  
For thee I make moan more than for the dead

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οὐ γὰρ τὸ μέν σοι βαρὺ κακῶν, τὸ δ' οὐ βαρὺ,  
 ἀλλ' εἰς ἅπαντα δυστυχήs ἐφυs, πάτερ  
 ἀτὰρ σ' ἐρωτῶ τὸν νεωστὶ κοίρανον  
 [τί τόνδ' ὑβρίζεις πατέρ' ἀποστέλλων χθονός,]  
 τί θεsμοποιεῖς ἐπὶ ταλαιπώρῳ νεκρῷ ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Ἐτεοκλέους βουλεύματ', οὐχ ἡμῶν τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄφρονά γε, καὶ σὺ μῶρος ὃs ἐπίθου τάδε.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶs ; τὰντεταλμέν' οὐ δίκαιον ἐκπονεῖν ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ, ἦν πονηρά γ' ἦ κακῶs τ' εἰρημένα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1650

τί δ', οὐ δικαίως ὃδε κυσὶν δοθήσεται ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἔννομον γὰρ τὴν δίκην πράσσεσθέ νυν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ γε πόλεως ἐχθρὸs ἦν, οὐκ ἐχθρὸs ὦν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκουν ἔδωκε τῇ τύχῃ τὸν δαίμονα ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ τῷ τάφῳ νυν τὴν δίκην παράσχετω

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἰ μετήλθε γῆs ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἄταφος ὃδ' ἀνὴρ, ὡs μάθης, γενήσεται

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἐγὼ σφε θάψω, καὶ ἀπεννέπη πόλις

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σαυτὴν ἄρ' ἐγγὺs τῷδε συνθάψεις νεκρῷ.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thine ills are not part heavy and part light,  
But in all things art thou in woeful case  
But thee I question, new-created king,  
[Why outrage thus my sire with banishment?]  
Wherefore make laws touching a hapless corse?

CREON

Eteocles' ordinance, not mine, is this

ANTIGONE

'Tis senseless—witless thou who giv'st it force

CREON

How, were't not just to carry out his hests?

ANTIGONE

If they be wrong, in malice spoken—no!

CREON

How, were't not just to cast yon man to dogs?

1650

ANTIGONE

Nay so ye wreak on him no lawful vengeance

CREON

Yea, if to Thebes a foe, no foe by birth

ANTIGONE

Hath he not unto fate paid forfeit life?

CREON

Forfeit of burial now too let him pay

ANTIGONE

Wherein sinned he, who came to claim his own?

CREON

This man shall have no burial, be thou sure

ANTIGONE

I, though the state forbid, will bury him

CREON

Thyself then shalt thou bury with thy dead

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εὐκλεές τοι δύο φίλῳ κείσθαι πέλας

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1660 λάζυσθε τήνδε κείς δόμους κομίζετε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοῦδ' οὐ μεθήσομαι νεκροῦ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκριν' ὁ δαίμων, παρθέν', οὐχ ἂ σοι δοκεῖ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

κάκεϊνο κέκριται, μὴ ἐφυβρίζεσθαι νεκρούς

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὥς οὔτις ἀμφὶ τῷδ' ὑγρὰν θήσει κύνιν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ναὶ πρός σε τῆσδε μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης, Κρέον

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μάταια μοχθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τύχοις τάδε

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ νεκρῷ λουτρὰ περιβαλεῖν μ' ἔα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐν τοῦτ' ἂν εἴη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τραύματ' ἄγρια τελαμῶνας βαλεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1670 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σὺ τόνδε τιμήσεις νέκυν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἀλλὰ στόμα γε σὸν προσπτύξομαι

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐ μὴ ἐς γάμους σοὺς συμφορὰν κτήσῃ γόοις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἦ γὰρ γαμοῦμαι ζῶσα παιδὶ σῷ ποτε ,

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πολλή γ' ἀνάγκη· ποῦ γὰρ ἐκφεύξει λέχος ;



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

'Tis glorious that two friends lie side by side

CREON

Seize ye this girl, and hale her within doors !

1660

ANTIGONE

• Never ! for I will not unclasp this corpse.

CREON

God hath decreed, girl, not as seems thee good

ANTIGONE

Yea—hath decreed this, *Outrage not the dead !*

CREON

Know, none shall spread the damp dust over him

ANTIGONE

Nay !—for Jocasta's, for his mother's sake !

CREON

Vain is thy labour, this thou shalt not win

ANTIGONE

Suffer at least that I may bathe the corpse

CREON

This shall be of the things the state forbids

ANTIGONE

Let me at least bind up his cruel wounds

CREON

Thou shalt in no wise honour this dead man

1670

ANTIGONE

Belovèd ! on thy lips this kiss at least—

CREON

Mar not thy bridal's fortune by laments

ANTIGONE

How ! living shall I e'er wed son of thine ?

CREON

Needs must thou Whither from the couch wilt flee ?

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## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

νύξ ἄρ' ἐκείνη Δαναίδων μ' ἔξει μίαν

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἶδες τὸ τόλμημ' οἶον ἐξωνείδισεν ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἴστω σίδηρος ὄρκιόν τέ μοι ξίφος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἐκπροθυμεῖ τῶνδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι γάμων ,

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

συμφεύξομαι τῷδ' ἀθλιωτάτῳ πατρί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1680 γενναιότης σοι, μωρία δ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ ξυνθανοῦμαί γ', ὥς μάθης περαιτέρω

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἴθι, οὐ φονεύσεις παῖδ' ἐμόν, λίπε χθόνα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, αἰνῶ μέν σε τῆς προθυμίας

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εἰ γαμοίμην, σὺ δὲ μόνος φεύγοις, πάτερ ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

μέν' εὐτυχούσα, τᾶμ' ἐγὼ στέρξω κακά

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ τίς σε τυφλὸν ὄντα θεραπεύσει, πάτερ ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πесὼν ὅπου μοι μοῖρα κείσομαι πέδῳ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίπους ποῦ καὶ τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὄλωλ'· ἐν ἡμάρ μ' ὤλβισ', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

That might shall prove me one of Danaus' Daughters<sup>1</sup> !

CREON (*to OEDIPUS*)

Dost mark how rails she in her recklessness ?

ANTIGONE (*raising POLYNICES' sword*)

Witness the steel—this sword whereby I swear

CREON

Wherefore so eager to avoid this bridal ?

ANTIGONE

I will share exile with mine hapless sire.

CREON

Noble thy spirit, yet lurks folly there

1680

ANTIGONE

Yea, and with him will die    Know this withal

CREON

Thou shalt not slay my son    Hence, leave the land !  
[*Exit*]

OEDIPUS

Daughter, for thy devotion thank I thee

ANTIGONE

I marry, father,—thou in exile lone !

OEDIPUS

Ah stay    be happy    I will bear mine ills

ANTIGONE

Who then will minister to thy blindness, father ?

OEDIPUS

Where my wend is, there shall I fall, there lie

ANTIGONE

Ah, where is Oedipus ?—where that riddle famed ?

OEDIPUS

Lost    One day blessed me, one hath ruined me

<sup>1</sup> Who slew the husbands whom they wedded perforce

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1690 οὔκουν μετασχεῖν καμὲ δεῖ τῶν σῶν κακῶν ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

αἰσχρὰ φυγὴ θυγατρὶ σὺν τυφλῷ πατρὶ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὔ, σωφρονούσῃ γ, ἄλλὰ γενναία, πάτερ.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

προσάγαγέ νῦν με, μητρὸς ὡς ψαύσω σέθεν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰδού, γεραιᾶς φιλτάτης ψαῦσον χερί

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦ μήτερ, ὦ ξυνάορ' ἄθλιωτάτη.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἰκτρὰ πρόκειται, πάντ' ἔχουσ' ὁμοῦ κακά.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

Ἐτεοκλέους δὲ πτώμα Πολυνείκους τε ποῦ ,

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τῷδ' ἐκτάδην σοι κείσθον ἀλλήλοιν πέλας

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

πρόσθε τυφλὴν χεῖρ' ἐπὶ πρόσωπα δυστυχῇ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1700 ἰδού, θανόντων σῶν τέκνων ἄπτου χερί

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦ φίλα πεσήματ' ἄθλι' ἄθλιου πατρός

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατον δῆτ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκους ἐμοί

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

νῦν χρησμός, ὦ παῖ, Λοξίου περαίνεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ ποῖος ; ἀλλ' ἦ πρὸς κακοῖς ἐρεῖς κακά ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις κατθανεῖν μ' ἀλώμενον

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Is it not then my due to share thine ills ? 1690

OEDIPUS

'Twere a maid's shame,—exile with her blind sire !

ANTIGONE

Nay, but—so she be wise—hei glory, father

OEDIPUS

That I may touch thy mother, guide me now

ANTIGONE

Lo, touch her with thine hand—so old, so dear !

OEDIPUS

Ah mother ! Ah, most hapless helpmeet mine !

ANTIGONE

Piteous she lies, with all ills crowned at once

OEDIPUS

Eteocles' corse, and Polyneices'—where ?

ANTIGONE

Here lie they, each by other's side outstretched

OEDIPUS

Lay my blind hand upon their ill-starred brows

ANTIGONE

Lo there touch with thine hand thy children slain 1700

OEDIPUS

Dear hapless dead sons of a hapless sire !

ANTIGONE

Ah Polyneices, name most dear to me !

OEDIPUS

Now, child, doth Loxias' oracle come to pass,—

ANTIGONE

What ? Wilt thou tell new ills beside the old ?

OEDIPUS

That I, a wanderer, should in Athens die

# ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ , τίς σε πύργος Ἀτθίδος προσδέξεται ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ιερός Κολωνός, δώμαθ' ἱππίου θεοῦ  
ἀλλ' εἶα, τυφλῷ τῷδ' ὑπηρέτει πατρί,  
ἐπεὶ προθυμεῖ τῇσδε κοινοῦσθαι φυγῆς

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1710 ἴθ' εἰς φυγὰν τάλαιναν ὄρεγε χέρα φίλαν,  
πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν  
ἔχων ἔμ' ὥστε ναυσίπομπον αὔραν

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἰδὸν πορεύομαι, τέκνον  
σύ μοι ποδαγὸς ἀθλία γενοῦ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

γενόμεθα γενόμεθ' ἀθλῖαί  
γε δῆτα Θηβαῖαν μάλιστα παρθένων

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πόθι γεραιὸν ἔχνος τίθημι ,  
βάκτρα πρόσφερ', ὦ τέκνον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1720 τᾶδε τᾶδς βᾶθί μοι,  
τᾶδε τᾶδε πόδα τίθει  
ὥστ' ὄνειρον ἰσχύν

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς  
ἐλαύνων τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας  
ἰὼ ἰώ, δεινὰ δειν' ἐγὼ τλᾶς

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τλᾶς ; τί τλᾶς , οὐχ ὀρᾷ Δίκα κακούς,  
οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βροτῶν ἀσυνεσίας.

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Where? What Athenian burg shall harbour thee?

OEDIPUS

Hallowed Colonus, Chariot-father's<sup>1</sup> home  
On then to this thy blind sire minister,  
Since thou art fixed to share my banishment

ANTIGONE

To woeful exile pass away  
Stretch forth, O father hoary-grey,  
Thy dear hand grasp me Thee I lead,  
As breeze wafts on the galley's speed

OEDIPUS

Lo, daughter, I pass on  
Thou guide me, hapless one.

ANTIGONE

Hapless I am—thou sayest well—  
Above all maids in Thebes that dwell

OEDIPUS

Where shall I plant mine old feet now?  
Reach me my staff, O daughter, thou

ANTIGONE

Hitherward, hitherward, tread  
Let thy feet follow hither mine hand,  
O strengthless as dream of the night!

OEDIPUS

Ah thou who on wretchedest exile hast sped  
The old man forth of his fatherland!  
Ah woes I have borne! Ah horror's height!

ANTIGONE

*Thou hast borne?—thou hast borne?—doth Justice  
regard not then*

The sinner? Requiteth she not the follies of men?

<sup>1</sup> Poseidon, the Sea-god, who created the first war-horse

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1730 ὄδ' εἰμὶ μούσαν ὃς ἐπὶ καλ-  
λίνικον οὐράνιον ἔβαν  
παρθένου κόρας αἰ-  
νιγμ' ἀσύνετον εὐρών

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Σφυιγγὸς ἀναφέρεις ὄνειδος  
ἄπαγε τὰ πάρος εὐτυχήματ' αὐδῶν  
τάδε σ' ἐπέμενε μέλεα πάθεα  
φυγάδα πατρίδος ἄπο γενόμενον,  
ὦ πάτερ, θανεῖν που  
ποθεινὰ δάκρυα παρὰ φίλαισι παρθένοις  
λιποῦς' ἄπειμι πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ γαίης  
ἀπαρθέεντ' ἄλωμένα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1740 φεῦ τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

εἰς πατρός γε συμφορὰς  
εὐκλεᾶ με θήσει  
τάλαιν' ἐγὼ [σῶν] συγγόνου θ' ὑβρισμάτων,  
ὃς ἐκ δόμων νέκυς ἄθραπτος οἴχεται  
μέλεος, ὄν, εἴ με καὶ θανεῖν, πάτερ, χρεῶν,  
σκότια γὰρ καλύψω

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πρὸς ἡλικας φάνηθι σάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλις ὀδυρμάτων ἐμῶν

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμίους λιτάς—

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1750 κόρον ἔχουσ' ἐμῶν κακῶν,



## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Lo, I am he on breath  
Of song upraised to heaven,  
When that dark riddle of the Maid of Death 1730  
To me to read was given

ANTIGONE

Why raise the ghost of shame, the Sphinx's story ?  
Forbear to vaunt too late that faded glory  
For thee this anguish lay the while in wait,  
Far from thy land to know the exile's fate,  
And, father, in some place unknown to die  
To maids who love me leaving tears of yearning,  
From fatherland an exile unreturning  
I wander far in plight unmaidenly

OEDIPUS

Woe for the heart where duty's fire is burning ! 1740

ANTIGONE

Twined with my father's sad renown  
This shall be mine unfading crown  
Woe for thy wrongs ! Brother, alas for thine,  
Who from thine home a tombless coise art thrust,  
Hapless ! Though death, my sire, for this be mine,  
Yet will I veil him secretly with dust

OEDIPUS

Show thee again to thy companions' eyes

ANTIGONE

Why should they weep ? Mine own laments suffice

OEDIPUS

At the Gods' altars then with suppliant cry—

ANTIGONE

They weary of my tale of misery 1750

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἴθ' ἀλλὰ Βρόμιος ἵνα τε ση-  
κὸς ἄβατος ὄρεσι μαινάδων

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Καδμείαν ᾧ  
νεβρίδα στολιδωσαμένα ποτ' ἐγὼ  
Σεμέλας θίασον  
ἱερὸν ὄρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,  
χάριν ἀχάριτον εἰς θεοὺς διδοῦσα ,

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ πάτρας κλινῆς πολῖται, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους  
ὅδε,  
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἔγνω καὶ μέγιστος ἦν  
ἀνὴρ,

1760 ὃς μόνος Σφυγγὸς κατέσχον τῆς μαιφόνου κράτη,  
νῦν ἄτιμος αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός  
ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί ταῦτα θρηνῶ καὶ μάτην ὀδύρομαι,  
τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θνητὸν ὄντα δεῖ φέρειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ μέγα σεμνὴ Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν  
βίοντον κατέχοις,  
καὶ μὴ λήγοις στεφανοῦσα

## THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Seek at the least the haunt of the Clamoui-god  
Mid hills of the Maenads by foot profane untrod

ANTIGONE

How !—render homage without heart  
To Him, for whom erstwhile arrayed  
In Theban fawnskins, I had part  
In Semele's holy dance that swayed  
By hill, by glade ?

OEDIPUS

People of a glorious nation, mark me—Oedipus am I,  
He who reared the middle world-renowned, the man  
once set on high,  
He whose single prowess quelled the Sphinx's blood- 1760  
polluted might  
Now dishonoured am I banished from the land in  
piteous plight  
Yet what boots it thus to wail ? What profits vainly  
to lament ?  
Whoso is but mortal needs must bear the fate of  
heaven sent [Exeunt OEDIPUS and ANTIGONE

CHORUS

Hail, revered Victory !  
Rest upon my life , and me  
Crown, and crown eternally !

[Exeunt OMNES.



## SUPPLIANTS



## ARGUMENT

IN the days when Theseus ruled in Athens, there was war between Argos and Thebes. For the two sons of Oedipus, being mindful of their father's curse, that they should divide their inheritance with the sword, covenanted to rule in turn, year by year, over Thebes. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes. But, forasmuch as in going he set at naught oracles and seers, his array was utterly broken in battle, and of those seven captains none returned, but Adrastus only. Thereafter, according to the sacred custom of Hellas, and the law of war, the Argives sent to require the Thebans to suffer them to bear away their slain that they might bury them. For, among the Greeks, if a man being dead obtained not burial, this was accounted a calamity worse than death, forasmuch as he was thereby made homeless and accurst in Hades. Yet did the Thebans impiously and despitefully reject that claim, being minded to wreak vengeance on their enemies after death. Then king Adrastus, with the mothers of the slain chiefs, came to Eleusis in Attica, and made supplication at the altar of Demeter to Aethra the mother of Theseus, and to the king's self. So Theseus consented to their prayer, and led the array of Athens against Thebes, and there fought and prevailed, and so brought back the bodies of those chiefs, and rendered to them the death-rites at Eleusis.

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ΙΦΙΣ

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑ



## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AETHRA, *mother of Theseus*

THESEUS, *son of Aegæus, king of Athens.*

ADRASTUS, *king of Argos*

HERALD, *from Creon king of Thebes*

MESSENGER *from the army of Theseus before Thebes*

EVADNE, *wife of Capaneus one of the seven chiefs.*

IPHIS, *father of Evadne*

SONS *of the slain chiefs.*

ATHENA, *Patron-goddess of Athens*

CHORUS, *consisting of the mothers of the slain chiefs, with their Handmaids*

*Athenian herala, guards, attendants, Athenian soldiers*

SCENE *In the forecourt of the temple of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis The great altar stands in the midst*

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

### ΑΙΘΡΑ

Δήμητερ ἐστιοῦχ' Ἐλευσίνος χθονὸς  
 τῆσδ', οἳ τε ναοὺς ἔχετε πρόσπολοι θεᾶς,  
 εὐδαιμονεῖν με Θησέα τε παῖδ' ἐμόν  
 πόλιν τ' Ἀθηνῶν τήν τε Πιτθέως χθόνα,  
 ἐν ᾗ με θρέψας ὀλβίοις ἐν δώμασιν  
 Αἴθραν πατὴρ δίδωσι τῷ Πανδίωνος  
 Αἰγεί δάμαρτα, Λοξίου μαντεύμασιν.  
 εἰς τάσδε γὰρ βλέψας' ἐπηυξάμην τάδε  
 γραῦς, αἰ' λιποῦσαι δώματ' Ἀργείας χθονὸς  
 10 ἱκτῆρι θαλλῷ προσπίτνουσ' ἐμόν γόνυ  
 πάθος παθοῦσαι δεινόν· ἀμφὶ γὰρ πύλας  
 Κάδμου θανόντων ἐπτὰ γενναίων τέκνων  
 ἄπαιδές εἰσιν, οὓς ποτ' Ἀργείων ἀναξ  
 Ἄδραστος ἤγαγ', Οἰδίπου παγκληρίας  
 μέρος κατασχεῖν φυγάδι Πολυνείκει θέλων  
 γαμβρῷ νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς ὀλωλότας δορὶ  
 θάψαι θέλουσι τῶνδε μητέρες χθονί·  
 εἴργουσι δ' οἱ κρατοῦντες οὐδ' ἀναίρεσιν  
 δοῦναι θέλουσι, νόμιμ' ἀτίζοντες θεῶν.

## SUPPLIANTS

*On the steps of the altar ÆTHRA is seated, and around her sit the members of the CHORUS. The olive-boughs of supplicance lie upon the altar, and from these are stretched woollen fillets, attaching them to ÆTHRA and the CHORUS. ADRASTUS lies prostrate on the earth, apart from these*

### ÆTHRA

DEMETER, waider of Eleusis-land,  
And ye which keep and serve the Goddess' fanes,  
Grant me and my son Theseus prosperous days,  
Grant them to Athens and to Pittheus' land,  
Where in a happy home my sire nursed me,  
Æthra, and gave me to Pandion's son  
Ægeus, to wife, by Loxias' oracles

Thus pray I as on these grey dames I look,  
These which have left their homes in Argos-land,  
And fall with suppliant bough before my knee, 10  
Stricken with grievous stroke for round the gates  
Of Cadmus lying are then seven sons dead,  
Sons of the childless, they whom Argos' king  
Adrastus led, in Oedipus' heritage  
To win his share for exiled Polyneices,  
His daughter's lord. The mothers now of these,  
The spear-slain, fain would lay them in the grave,  
Wherefrom the victors let them, and refuse  
The corpses, setting the Gods' laws at naught

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

20 κοινὸν δὲ φόρτον ταῖσδ' ἔχων χρείας ἐμῆς  
 Ἕδραστος ὄμμα δάκρυσιν τέγγων ὅδε  
 κείται, τό τ' ἔγχος τήν τε δυστυχεστάτην  
 στένων στρατείαν ἣν ἔπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων  
 ὅς μ' ἐξοτρύνει παῖδ' ἐμὸν πείσαι λιταῖς  
 νεκρῶν κομιστὴν ἢ λόγοισιν ἢ δορὸς  
 ῥώμῃ γενέσθαι καὶ τάφου μεταίτιον,  
 μόνον τόδ' ἔργον προστιθείς ἐμῷ τέκνῳ  
 πόλει τ' Ἀθηνῶν. τυγχάνω δ' ὑπὲρ χθονὸς  
 30 ἄρότου προθύουσ' ἐκ δόμων ἐλθούσ' ἐμῶν  
 πρὸς τόνδε σηκόν, ἔνθα πρῶτα φαίνεται  
 φρίξας ὑπὲρ γῆς τῆσδε κάρπιμος στάχυσ  
 δεσμὸν δ' ἄδεσμον τόνδ' ἔχουσα φυλλάδος  
 μένω πρὸς ἀγναῖς ἐσχάrais δυοῖν θεαῖν  
 Κόρης τε καὶ Δήμητρος, οἰκτείρουσα μὲν  
 πολλὰς ἄπαιδας τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,  
 σέβουσα δ' ἱερὰ στέμματ'. οἷχεται δέ μοι  
 κῆρυξ πρὸς ἄστυ δεῦρο Θησέα καλῶν,  
 ὥς ἢ τὸ τούτων λυπρὸν ἐξέλη χθονός,  
 ἢ τάσδ' ἀνάγκας ἱκεσίους λύσῃ, θεοὺς  
 40 ὁσιόν τι δράσας· πάντα γὰρ δι' ἁρσένων  
 γυναιξὶ πράσσειν εἰκός, αἵτινες σοφαί

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἱκετεύω σε, γεραιά, στρ α'  
 γεραιῶν ἐκ στομάτων,  
 πρὸς γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ σὸν  
 ἄνα μοι τέκνα λῦσαι φθιμένων

## SUPPLIANTS

Sharing the burden of their need of me, 20  
 Adrastus lieth here, his eyes with tears  
 Drowned, mourning for the battle-shivered spear  
 And that ill-starred array led forth of him  
 Sore pleadeth he with me to bend by prayers  
 My son to be redeemer of the dead  
 By speech or spear, and helper to the grave,  
 Laying this charge alone upon my son  
 And Athens Now it chanceth that I come  
 For the land's harvest's sake from forth mine halls  
 To this god's-acre, where first rose to light  
 Above the earth's face bristling ears of corn 30

And, bound in this strong gossamer-chain of leaves,<sup>1</sup>  
 At the two Goddesses' holy hearths I stay,  
 Demeter's and her Daughter's, both for ruth  
 Of these unchilded mothers silver-haired,  
 And awe of the holy bands To Athens sped  
 Mine herald is, to summon Theseus hither,  
 That he may banish from the land these mourners,<sup>2</sup>  
 Or loose this strong constraint of supppliance  
 By rendering heaven its due Seemly it is 40  
 That women, which be wise, still act through men

### CHORUS

(*Str* 1)

Reverend Queen, with aged lips do I implore thee,  
 In my supppliance at thy knee I fall before thee  
 O redeem thou unto me from that assemblage of the  
 dead

<sup>1</sup> The woollen fillets and boughs could not be removed without sacrilege

<sup>2</sup> The presence of such, especially at the temple of Demeter, was ominous of evil, which the king only could avert, either by granting their request, or by refusing it and ordering them to depart

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

νεκύων, οἷ καταλείπουσιν μέλη  
θανάτῳ λυσιμελεῖ θηρσὶν ὀρείοισι βοράν·

ἑσίδουσ' οἰκτρὰ μὲν ὄσσων ἀντ. α

δάκρυ' ἄμφ' βλεφάροις,

50 ῥυσὰ δὲ σαρκῶν πολιῶν

καταδρύμματα χειρῶν τί γάρ, ἅ

φθιμένους παῖδας ἑμὸν οὔτε δόμοις

προθέμαν, οὔτε τάφων χῶματα γαίας ἑσορῶ

ἔτεκες καὶ σύ ποτ', ὦ πότνια, κούρου στρ β'

φίλα ποιησαμένα

λέκτρα πόσει σῶ' μέτα νυν

δὸς ἑμοὶ σᾶς διανοίας,

μετάδος δ', ὅσσον ἐπαλγῶ μελέα

τῶν φθιμένων οὓς ἔτεκον

60 παράπεισον δὲ τὸ σόν, λισσόμεθ', ἔλθειν

τέκνον Ἰσμηνὸν ἑμάν τ' εἰς χέρα θεῖναι

νεκύων θαλερῶν σώματ' ἀλαίνοντ' ἄταφα <sup>1</sup>

ὀσίως οὔχ, ὑπ' ἀνάγκας δὲ προπίπτου- ἀντ. β

σα προσαιτοῦσ' ἑμολον

δεξιπύρους θεῶν θυμέλας·

ἔχομεν δ' ἔνδिका· καὶ σοί

τι πάρεστι σθένος ὥστ' εὐτεκνία

δυστυχίαν τὰν παρ' ἑμοὶ

καθελεῖν οἰκτρὰ δὲ πάσχουσ' ἰκετεύω

<sup>1</sup> Muriax for λάινον τάφον

## SUPPLIANTS

My beloved, from the harvest that the hand of death  
hath spread [my womb<sup>1</sup>  
For the mountain-beasts to ravin on the children of

(*Ant* 1)

Look upon me —from mine eyes in my despairing  
Tears are streaming, and my frenzied hands are 50  
tearing [should I do but mourn,  
Crimson furrows on my wrinkled cheeks What  
Who have laid not out my dead unto their burial to  
be borne, [for their tomb?  
And who see not any heaping of the earth-mound

(*Str* 2)

Thou hast borne a little one, thou hast given a  
princely son [joy in thee  
To thy lord, that marriage-treasure made his heart to  
Let the full soul deal its bread to the sad ones  
famished  
Give according to the measure of my childless agony  
Bend the spirit of thy son, that he may go, whose 60  
help we crave, [our dead—  
To Ismenus, that our hands may lay the bodies of  
Who are outcasts now in Hades, being tombless—  
in the grave

(*Ant* 2)

Not according unto rite,<sup>1</sup> but as overmastering might  
Of Necessity constraineth, at the altars do I bend  
Whence to heaven leaps the flame, and the right  
is that I claim  
Thou art strong, thy son remaineth,—thou canst  
make my sorrows end [wild  
Out of depths of sorest anguish bring my supplication

<sup>1</sup> There was no place in the temple-ritual for mourning

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

70 τὸν ἐμὸν παῖδα τάλαιν' ἐν χερὶ θεῖναι  
νέκυν, ἀμφιβαλεῖν λυγρὰ μέλη παιδὸς ἐμοῦ

ἀγὼν ὃδ' ἄλλος ἔρχεται γόων γόοις στρ γ'  
διάδοχος ἀχοῦσιν προπόλων χέρες  
ἴτ' ὦ ξυνωδοὶ κακοῖς,  
ἴτ' ὦ ξυναλγηδόνες,  
χορὸν τὸν Ἄιδας σέβει,  
διὰ παρῆδος ὄνυχ' αὖτε λευκὸν  
αἵματόυτε χρωτὰ τε φόνιον  
τὰ γὰρ φθιτῶν τοῖς ὀρώσι κόσμος

80 ἄπληστος ἄδε μ' ἐξάγει χάρις γόων ἀντ. γ'  
πολύπονός, ὥς ἐξ ἀλιβιάτου πέτρας  
ὑγρὰ ῥέουσα σταγῶν,  
ἄπαυστος αἰὲ γόων  
τὸ γὰρ θανόντων τέκνων  
ἐπίπονόν τι κατὰ γυναῖκας  
εἰς γόους πέφυκε πάθος. ἔ ἔ.  
θανοῦσα τῶνδ' ἀλγέων λαθοίμαν.

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

90 τίνων γόων ἤκουσα καὶ στέρνων κτύπον  
νεκρῶν τε θρήνους, τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων ἀπο  
ἠχοῦς ἰούσης; ὥς φόβος μ' ἀναπτεροῖ  
μή μοί τι μήτηρ, ἣν μεταστείχω παδὶ  
χρονίαν ἀποῦσαν ἐκ δόμων, ἔχῃ νέον.  
ἔα.  
τί χρήμα, καινὰς εἰσβολὰς ὀρώ λόγων·  
μητέρα γεραιὰν βωμίαν ἐφημένην  
ξένας θ' ὁμοῦ γυναῖκας, οὐχ ἓνα ῥυθμὸν



## SUPPLIANTS

That thou give me but a corpse, in mine embrace  
to hold the same, [my child  
And to fling mine arms around the piteous body of 70  
*The attendant HANDMAIDS, beating their breasts and  
marring their faces, wail in unison with the MOTHERS*

O hearken yon wails to our wailing replying, (*Str* 3)  
To the hands of our handmaidens smiting hard  
On their bosoms ! Come, ye that re-echo our crying  
With a burden of mourning, who sigh with our  
sighing—

Come ye to the one dance Death doth regard ,  
Rend, rend ye the cheek, till the red stains streak  
White fingers —the dues that our dear dead seek  
Shall be all our reward

Unsatisfied mourning my soul is enthralling (*Ant* 3)  
Sorrow-burdened, as forth from a precipice flows 80  
A spring with its rain ever flashing and falling  
Unrestingly wailing to wailing is calling ,

For the heart's love of woman but one path knows,  
Nor can choose but to moan for the dear dead son —  
And oh that the days of my life were done,  
And forgotten my woes !

*Enter THESEUS*

THESEUS

What wailings heard I, smitings upon breasts,  
And dirges for the dead, as rang the sound [fear  
From the holy place ? How throbs mine heart with  
Lest to my mother, who hath drawn me hither 90  
By her long absence, some mischance betide  
Ha !

What see I here ? What strange tale is to tell ?  
At the altar sitting my grey mother is,  
And alien dames with her in diverse guise

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κακῶν ἐχούσας ἔκ τε γὰρ γερασμίων  
 ὄσσων ἐλαύνουσ' οἰκτρὸν εἰς γαῖαν δάκρυ,  
 κουραὶ δὲ καὶ πεπλώματ' οὐ θεωρικά.  
 τί ταῦτα, μήτερ, σὸν τὸ μηνύειν ἐμοί,  
 ἡμῶν δ' ἀκούειν προσδοκῶ τι γὰρ νέον

ΑΙΘΡΑ

100

ὦ παῖ, γυναῖκες αἶδε μητέρες τέκνων  
 τῶν κατθανόντων ἀμφὶ Καδμείας πύλας  
 ἐπτα στρατηγῶν ἱκεσίοις δὲ σὺν κλάδοις  
 φρουροῦσί μ', ὥς δέδορκας, ἐν κύκλῳ, τέκνον

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίς δ' ὁ στενάζων οἰκτρὸν ἐν πύλαις ὄδε,

ΑΙΘΡΑ

Ἄδραστος, ὥς λέγουσιν, Ἀργείων ἄναξ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἱ δ' ἀμφὶ τόνδε παῖδες ἦ τούτου τέκνα;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ νεκρῶν τῶν ὀλωλότων κόροι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἦλθον ἱκεσία χερί,

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οἶδ'· ἀλλὰ τῶνδε μῦθος οὐντεῦθεν, τέκνον

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

110

σὲ τὸν κατήρη χλανιδίοις ἀνιστορῶ.  
 λέγ' ἐκκαλύψας κρᾶτα καὶ πάρες γόον·  
 πέρας γὰρ οὐδὲν μὴ διὰ γλώσσης ἰόν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ καλλίνικε γῆς Ἀθηναίων ἄναξ,  
 Θησεῦ, σὸς ἱκέτης καὶ πόλεως ἥκω σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί χρῆμα θηρῶν καὶ τίνος χρεῖαν ἔχων,

## SUPPLIANTS

Of sore affliction, for the piteous tear  
Unto the ground from aged eyes they drop  
Shorn hair and garb unmeet for worshippers !  
What means it, mother ? 'Tis thy part to tell,  
And mine to hear I look for some strange thing

AETHRA

My son, these dames the mothers are of those, 100  
The chieftains seven, that in battle fell  
By gates Cadmean And with suppliant boughs  
Compassed they hold me, captive, as thou seest

THESEUS

Who yonder at the gates makes piteous moan ?

AETHRA

Adrastus, as they tell, the Argive king

THESEUS

And yon lads at his side, his boys are they ?

AETHRA

Nay, but the sons of those dead which have died

THESEUS

Wherefore to us came they with suppliant hand ?

AETHRA

I know —but these must tell the rest, my son.

THESEUS

Thee, in thy mantle muffled close, I ask— 110  
Unshroud thine head, speak, let thy mourning be,  
Naught shalt thou profit, if naught pass thy tongue

ADRASTUS

O triumph-glorious king of Athens' land,  
Theseus, I come thy suppliant and thy city's

THESEUS

What seekest thou, and whereof hast thou need ?

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἷσθ' ἦν στρατεῖαν ἐστράτευς' ὀλεθρίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐ γάρ τι σιγῇ διεπέρασας Ἑλλάδα

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐνταῦθ' ἀπώλες' ἄνδρας Ἀργείων ἄκρους

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τοιαῦθ' ὁ τλήμων πόλεμος ἐξεργάζεται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

120 τούτους θανόντας ἦλθον ἐξαιτῶν πόλιν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κήρυξιν Ἑρμοῦ πίσυνος, ὡς θάψης νεκρούς ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

καῖπειτά γ' οἱ κτανόντες οὐκ ἐῷσί με.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ λέγουσιν, ὅσια χρήζοντος σέθεν ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τί δ' , εὐτυχοῦντες οὐκ ἐπίστανται φέρειν

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ξύμβουλον οὖν μ' ἐπῆλθες , ἥ τίνος χάριν ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κομίσαι σε, Θησεῦ, παῖδας Ἀργείων θέλων

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὑμῖν ποῦ 'στιν , ἥ κόμπαι μάτην ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

σφαλέντες οἰχόμεσθα. πρὸς σέ δ' ἤκομεν

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἰδίᾳ δοκῆσάν σοι τόδ' ἥ πάσῃ πόλει ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

130 πάντες σ' ἱκνοῦνται Δαναῖδαι θάψαι νεκρούς

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐλαύνεις ἐπτὰ πρὸς Θήβας λόχους ;

## SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Thou know'st what host I to destruction led

THESEUS

Yea, not in silence passedst thou through Greece

ADRASTUS

The chiefest men of Argos lost I there

THESEUS

Such desolation worketh woeful wai

ADRASTUS

And these my dead I went to ask of Thebes 120

THESEUS

Did heralds sanctify thy burial-claim ?

ADRASTUS

Yea even so the slayers grant them not

THESEUS

What say they to thy plea of holy right ?

ADRASTUS

Ay, what ?—prosperity hath puffed them up

THESEUS

For counsel com'st thou then, or what wouldst thou ?

ADRASTUS

That thou shouldst rescue, Theseus, Argos' sons

THESEUS

Where is your Argos ? Is her vaunting vain ?

ADRASTUS

We are fallen and undone To thee we come

THESEUS

Dost thou alone will this, or all thy state ?

ADRASTUS

All Danaus' sons beseech thee entomb their dead 130

THESEUS

Why didst thou march those seven hosts to Thebes ?

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δισσοῖσι γαμβροῖς τήνδε πορσύνων χάριν

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τῷ δ' ἐξέδωκας παῖδας Ἀργείων σέθεν ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἐγγενῇ συνήψα κηδεῖαν δόμοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀλλὰ ξένοις ἔδωκας Ἀργείας κόρας ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεῖ γε Πολυνείκει τε τῷ Θηβαγενεῖ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίν' εἰς ἔρωτα τῆσδε κηδείας μολών ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Φοίβου μ' ὑπῆλθε δυστόπαστ' αἰνίγματα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων παρθένοις κραίνων γάμον

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

140 κάπρῳ με δοῦναι καὶ λέοντι παῖδ' ἐμῷ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξελίσσεις πῶς θεοῦ θεσπίσματα ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐλθόντε φυγάδε νυκτὸς εἰς ἐμὰς πύλας,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίς καὶ τίς , εἶπέ δύο γὰρ ἐξαυδᾶς ἅμα

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μάχην ξυνήψε Πολυνείκης θ' ἅμα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦ τοῖσδ' ἔδωκας θηρσὶν ὥς κόρας σέθεν ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

μάχην γε δισσοῖν κνωδάλοιν ἀπεικάσας

## SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

To my two daughters' lords this grace I showed

THESEUS

Thy daughters? To what Argives gav'st thou them?

ADRASTUS

With no man native-born I linked mine house

THESEUS

Ha! gavest thou to aliens Argive maids?

ADRASTUS

To Tydeus, and to Thebes' son Polyneices

THESEUS

Whence thy strong love for such affinity?

ADRASTUS

Phoebus' dark saying wrought upon my mind

THESEUS

What spake Apollo to control then marriage?

ADRASTUS

*"Thy daughters give to a lion and a boar"*

THESEUS

And the God's precept how unfoldest thou?

ADRASTUS

There came by night two exiles to my gates

THESEUS

Who this, who that?—for thou dost speak of twain

ADRASTUS

Tydeus and Polyneices there they fought

THESEUS

To these, as those wild beasts, gav'st thou thy daughters?

ADRASTUS

Yea like those monsters twain, methought, they  
strove

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦλθον δὲ δὴ πῶς πατρίδος ἐκλιπόνθ' ὄρους ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μὲν αἶμα συγγενὲς φεύγων χθονός

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίπου παῖς τίνι τρόπῳ Θήβας λιπών ,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

150 ἀραίς πατρώαις, μὴ κασίγνητον κτάνοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σοφὴν γ' ἔλεξας τήνδ' ἐκούσιον φυγὴν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἱ μένοντες τοὺς ἀπόντας ἡδίκουν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦ πού σφ' ἀδελφὸς χρημάτων νοσφίζεται ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἐκδικάζων ἦλθον· εἴτ' ἀπωλόμην.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μάντεις δ' ἐπῆλθες ἐμπύρων τ' εἶδες φλόγα ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἴμοι διώκεις μ' ἢ μάλιστ' ἐγὼ σφάλην

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἦλθες, ὥς ἔοικεν, εὐνοία θεῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πλέον, ἦλθον Ἀμφιάρεώ γε πρὸς βίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὕτω τὸ θεῖον ῥαδίως ἀπεστράφη ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

160 νέων γὰρ ἀνδρῶν θόρυβος ἐξέπλησσε με.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐψυχίαν ἔσπευσας ἀντ' εὐβουλίας.



## SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

How left they home-land's bounds, and came to thee ?

ADRASTUS

Tydeus, for shedding blood of kin exiled

THESEUS

And Oedipus' son, for what cause left he Thebes ?

ADRASTUS

His father's curse, lest he should slay his brother

THESEUS

Wise was that self-sought exile, named of thee

ADRASTUS

But they that tarried wrought the absent wrong.

THESEUS

Ha ! did his brother take his heritage ?

ADRASTUS

To claim his right I came—and found my ruin

THESEUS

Didst seek to seers, and gaze on altar-flames ?

ADRASTUS

Ah me ! thou pressest me where most I erred !

THESEUS

Not with heaven's blessing didst thou go, methinks

ADRASTUS

Nay, worse, in Amphiaræus' despite I went

THESEUS

Didst thou thus lightly flout the will divine ?

ADRASTUS

The clamour of the young men daunted me

THESEUS

Valour instead of wisdom favouredst thou

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

- ὃ δὴ γε πολλοὺς ὤλεσε στρατηλάτας  
 ἀλλ' ὦ καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἀλκιμώτατον κára,  
 ἄναξ Ἀθηνῶν, ἐν μὲν αἰσχύναις ἔχω  
 πίτνων πρὸς οὐδας γόνυ σὸν ἀμπίσχειν χερί,  
 πολιδὸς ἀνὴρ τύραννος εὐδαίμων πάρος·  
 ὁμῶς δ' ἀνάγκη συμφοραῖς εἴκειν ἐμαῖς  
 σῶσον νεκροὺς μοι τὰμὰ τ' οἰκτεῖρας κακὰ  
 καὶ τῶν θανόντων τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,  
 170 αἷς γῆρας ἤκει πολιδὸν εἰς ἀπαιδίαν,  
 ἐλθεῖν δ' ἔτλησαν δεῦρο καὶ ξένον πόδα  
 θεῖναι μόλις γεραῖα κινουῖσαι μέλη,  
 πρεσβεύματ' οὐ Δῆμητρος εἰς μυστήρια,  
 ἀλλ' ὥς νεκροὺς θάψωσιν, ἃς αὐτὰς ἐχρήν  
 κείνων ταφείσας χερσὶν ὠραίων τυχεῖν.  
 σοφὸν δὲ πενίαν τ' εἰσορᾶν τὸν ὄλβιον,  
 πένητά τ' εἰς τοὺς πλουσίους ἀποβλέπειν  
 ζηλοῦνθ', ἵν' αὐτὸν χρημάτων ἔρωσ ἔχη,  
 180 τὰ τ' οἰκτρὰ τοὺς μὴ δυστυχεῖς δεδορκέναι·  
 [τόν θ' ὕμνοποιὸν αὐτὸς ἂν τίκτῃ μέλη  
 χαίροντα τίκτειν ἦν δὲ μὴ πάσχη τόδε,  
 οὔτοι δύναιτ' ἂν οἴκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος  
 τέρπειν ἂν ἄλλους· οὐδὲ γὰρ δίκην ἔχει ]<sup>1</sup>  
 τάχ' οὖν ἂν εἴποις, Πελοπίαν παρεῖς χθόνα  
 πῶς ταῖς Ἀθήναις τόνδε προστάσσεις πόνον,  
 ἐγὼ δίκαιός εἰμ' ἀφηγεῖσθαι τάδε  
 Σπάρτη μὲν ὦμῃ καὶ πεποίκιλται τρόπους,  
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα μικρὰ κάσθενῇ πόλις δὲ σὴ  
 μόνη δύναιτ' ἂν τόνδ' ὑποστῆναι πόνον.  
 190 τὰ τ' οἰκτρὰ γὰρ δέδορκε καὶ νεανίαν

<sup>1</sup> By most editors regarded as an irrelevant interpolation

## SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Even that hath ruined many a battle-chief  
O thou in prowess first all Hellas through,  
O king of Athens, soie ashamed am I  
To fall to earth, and to embrace thy knee,  
A grey-haired king in time past prosperous  
Yet to mine evil plight I needs must bow

Save thou my dead, compassionate my woes,  
And these the mothers of the slaughtered sons  
Whom hoary age hath found in childlessness. 170  
Who have endured to come, on alien soil  
To set then feet, who scarce for eld may creep ;  
No mission to Demeter's mysteries,  
But seeking burial for their dead, a boon  
Themselves should have obtained of young strong  
hands

Wisely doth wealth consider poverty  
Wisely to wealth the poor uplifts his eyes  
Aspiring, that desire of good may spur him  
So ought the prosperous to look on woe  
[The poet's self in gladness should bring forth 180  
His offspring, song, if he attain not this,  
He cannot from a heart distraught with pain  
Gladden his fellows reason sayeth nay ]

Perchance thou askest, " Why pass by the land  
Of Pelops, and on Athens lay this charge ? "  
Sooth, right it is that I should answer this —  
Sparta is heartless, never at one stay,  
The rest be small and weak · but this thy burg  
Alone can stand beneath the mighty strain  
'Twas ever pitiful, and hath in thee

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ἔχει σὲ ποιμέν' ἐσθλόν· οὐ χρεῖα πόλεις  
πολλαὶ διώλουντ' ἐνδεεῖς στρατηλάτου

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγὼ τὸν αὐτὸν τῷδέ σοι λόγον λέγω,  
Θησεῦ, δι' οἴκτου τὰς ἐμὰς λαβεῖν τύχας

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

- ἄλλοισι δὴ 'πόνησ' ἀμιλληθεὶς λόγῳ  
τοιῷδ'. ἔλεξε γάρ τις ὡς τὰ χείρονα  
πλεῖω βροτοῖσιν ἐστὶ τῶν ἀμεινόνων·  
ἐγὼ δὲ τούτοις ἀντίαν γνώμην ἔχω  
πλεῖω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς  
200 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν τόδ', οὐκ ἂν ἦμεν ἐν φάει.  
αἰνῶ δ' ὃς ἡμῖν βίοτον ἐκ πεφυρμένου  
καὶ θηριώδους θεῶν διεσταθμήσατο,  
πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθεὶς σύνεσιν, εἶτα δ' ἄγγελον  
γλῶσσαν λόγων δούς, ὡς γεγωνίσκειν ὅπα,  
τροφὴν τε καρποῦ τῇ τροφῇ τ' ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ  
σταγόνας ὑδρηλάς, ὡς τὰ γ' ἐκ γαίας τρέφῃ  
ἄρρη τε νηδύν· πρὸς δὲ τοῖσι χείματος  
προβλήματ', αἶθρον ἐξαμύνασθαι θεοῦ,  
πόντου τε ναυστολήμαθ', ὡς διαλλαγὰς  
210 ἔχοιμεν ἀλλήλοισιν ὧν πένοιτο γῇ  
ἃ δ' ἔστ' ἄσημα κοῦ σαφῶς γιγνώσκομεν,  
εἰς πῦρ βλέποντες καὶ κατὰ σπλάγχχνων πτυχὰς  
μάντιες προσημαίνουσιν οἰωνῶν τ' ἄπο.  
ἄρ' οὐ τρυφῶμεν θεοῦ κατασκευὴν βίῳ  
δόντος τοιαύτην, οἷσιν οὐκ ἄρκει τάδε ,  
ἀλλ' ἢ φρόνησις τοῦ θεοῦ μεῖζον σθένειν  
ζητεῖ, το γαῦρον δ' ἐν φρεσὶν κεκτημένοι  
δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δαιμόνων σοφώτεροι  
ἥς καὶ σὺ φαίνει δεκάδος οὐ σοφὸς γεγώς,  
220 ὅστις κόρας μὲν θεσφάτοις Φοίβου ζυγεῖς

## SUPPLIANTS

A young and valorous chief, for lack of whom  
To lead their hosts, have many cities fallen

### CHORUS

I too put up to thee the selfsame prayer,  
Theseus, to have compassion on my lot

### THESEUS

With others oft in wrestle of argument  
I have grappled touching this —there be that say  
That evil more abounds with men than good  
Opinion adverse unto these I hold  
That more than evil good abounds with men  
Were this not so, we were not of the light 200

Praise to the God who shaped in order's mould  
Our lives redeemed from chaos and the brute,  
First, by implanting reason, giving then  
The tongue, word-herald, to interpret speech,  
Earth's fruit for food, for nurturing thereof  
Raindrops from heaven, to feed earth's fosterlings,  
And water her green bosom, therewithal  
Shelter from storm, and shadow from the heat,  
Sea-tracking ships, that traffic might be ours  
With fellow-men of that which each land lacks, 210  
And, for invisible things or dimly seen,  
Soothsayers watch the flame, the liver's folds,  
Or from the birds divine the things to be

Are we not arrogant then, when all life's needs  
God giveth, therewith not to be content?  
But our presumption stronger fain would be  
Than God —we have gotten overweening hearts,  
And dream that we be wiser than the Gods  
And thou art of this fellowship of folly,  
Who didst by Phoebus' hest thy daughters wed, 220

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ξένοισιν ὧδ' ἔδωκας ὡς ζώντων θεῶν,  
 λαμπρὸν δὲ θολερῷ δῶμα συμμίξας τὸ σὸν  
 ἤλκωσας οἴκους· χρῆν γὰρ οὐδὲ σώματα  
 ἄδικα δικαίοις τὸν σοφὸν συμμιγνύναι,  
 εὐδαιμονοῦντας δ' εἰς δόμους κτᾶσθαι φίλους  
 κοινὰς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς τύχας ἡγούμενος  
 τοῖς τοῦ νοσοῦντος πῆμασιν διώλεσε  
 τὸν συννοσοῦντα κοῦδὲν ἡδικηκότα.  
 εἰς δὲ στρατεῖαν πάντας Ἀργείους ἄγων,  
 230 μάντεων λεγόντων θέσφατ', εἴτ' ἀτιμάσας  
 βία παρελθὼν θεοὺς ἀπώλεσας πόλιν,  
 νέοις παραχθείς, οὔτινες τιμώμενοι  
 χαίρουσι πολέμους τ' αὐξάνουσ' ἄνευ δίκης,  
 φθείροντες ἀστούς, ὁ μὲν ὅπως στρατηλατῇ,  
 ὁ δ' ὡς ὑβρίζῃ δύναμιν εἰς χεῖρας λαβών,  
 ἄλλος δὲ κέρδους εἵνεκ', οὐκ ἀποσκοπῶν  
 τὸ πλῆθος εἴ τι βλάπτεται πάσχον τάδε.  
 τρεῖς γὰρ πολιτῶν μερίδες· οἱ μὲν ὄλβιοι  
 ἀνωφελεῖς τε πλειόνων τ' ἐρώσ' αἰεὶ  
 240 οἱ δ' οὐκ ἔχοντες καὶ σπανίζοντες βίου,  
 δεινοὶ, νέμοντες τῷ φθόνῳ πλέον μέρος,  
 εἰς τοὺς ἔχοντας κέντρ' ἀφιάσιν κακά,  
 γλώσσαις πονηρῶν προστατῶν φηλούμενοι·  
 τριῶν δὲ μοιρῶν ἡ' ὕ μέσῳ σφῶζει πόλεις,  
 κόσμον φυλάσσουσ' ὄντιν' ἂν τάξῃ πόλις  
 κάππειτ' ἐγὼ σοι σύμμαχος γενήσομαι;  
 τί πρὸς πολίτας τοὺς ἐμούς λέγων καλόν,  
 χαίρων ἴθ' εἰ γὰρ μὴ βεβούλευσαι καλῶς,  
 αὐτὸς πιέζειν τὴν τύχην, ἡμᾶς δ' ἑᾶν

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

250 ἡμαρτεν· ἐν νέοισι δ' ἀνθρώπων τόδε  
 ἔνεστι· συγγνώμην δὲ τῷδ' ἔχειν χρεῶν.

## SUPPLIANTS

To aliens—thus far recognising Gods,—  
 Yet mingling thy clear blood with turbid, so  
 Didst mar thine house thou oughtest ne'er to have  
 blent,

So thou wert wise, just lives with lives unjust,  
 But for thine house to have gotten heaven-blest  
 friends.

For God, adjudging fates joined hand in hand,  
 Destroyeth by the sinner's stroke whoe'er  
 Partaketh with him, though he have not sinned  
 Thou ledest forth the Argives all to war, [naught  
 Though seers spake heaven's warning, setting at 230  
 These, flouting Gods, didst ruin so thy state,  
 By young men led astray, which love the praise  
 Of men, and multiply wars wrongfully,  
 Corrupting others, one, to lead the host,  
 One, to win power, and use it for his lust,  
 And one for lucre's sake, who recketh naught  
 Of mischief to a people thus misused  
 For in a nation there be orders three —  
 The highest, useless rich, aye craving more,  
 The lowest, poor, aye on starvation's brink, 240  
 A dangerous folk, of envy overfull,  
 Which shoot out baleful stings at prosperous folk,  
 Beguiled by tongues of evil men, their "champions" .  
 But of the three the midmost saveth states,  
 Who keep the order which the state ordains.  
 Shall I then make me ally unto thee?  
 How to my nation should I make defence?  
 Depart in peace if thou hast ill devised,  
 Face fortune's blows thyself, drag us not down

### CHORUS

He erred, yet on the young men rests the blame 250  
 But meet it is that he find grace with thee.

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

### ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὔτοι δικαστήν σ' εἰλόμην ἐμῶν κακῶν,  
 ἀλλ' ὥς ἱατρὸν τῶνδ', ἀναξ, ἀφίγμεθα,<sup>1</sup>  
 οὐδ', εἴ τι πράξας μὴ καλῶς εὐρίσκομαι,  
 τούτων κολαστήν κἀπιτιμητήν, ἀναξ,  
 ἀλλ' ὥς ὀναίμην εἰ δὲ μὴ βούλει τάδε,  
 στέργειν ἀνάγκη τοῖσι σοῖς· τί γὰρ πάθω,  
 ἄγ', ὦ γεραιαί, στείχετε, γλαυκὴν χλόην  
 αὐτοῦ λιποῦσαι φυλλάδος καταστεφῇ,  
 260 θεοὺς τε καὶ γῆν τήν τε πυρφόρον θεῶν  
 Δῆμητρα θέμεναι μάρτυρ' ἡλίου τε φῶς,  
 ὥς οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἤρκεσαν λιταὶ θεῶν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

\* \* \* \* \*

ὃς Πέλοπος ἦν παῖς, Πελοπίας δ' ἡμεῖς χθονὸς  
 ταύτῳ πατρῶον αἷμα σοὶ κεκτήμεθα

### ΑΙΘΡΑ<sup>2</sup>

τί δρᾶς, προδώσεις ταῦτα κάκβαλεῖς χθονὸς  
 γραῦς οὐ τυχούσας οὐδὲν ὦν αὐτὰς ἐχρήν,  
 μὴ δῆτ'· ἔχει γὰρ καταφυγὴν θῆρ μὲν πέτραν,  
 δούλος δὲ βωμοὺς θεῶν, πόλις δὲ πρὸς πόλιν  
 ἔπηξε χεῖμασθεῖσα τῶν γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς  
 270 οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν διὰ τέλους εὐδαιμονοῦν

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ

βᾶθι, τάλαιν', ἱερῶν δαπέδων ἄπο Περσεφονείας,  
 βᾶθι καὶ ἀντίασον γονάτων ἐπὶ χεῖρα βαλοῦσα,  
 τέκνων τεθνεώτων κομίσαι δέμας, ὦ μελέα ἰγώ,  
 οὐς ὑπὸ τείχεσι Καδμείοισιν ἀπώλεσα κούρους

<sup>1</sup> Placed by Barnes here, instead of after 251, as in MSS,

<sup>2</sup> So assigned by Paley, by other editors to Chorus



## SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Not for a judge I chose thee of mine ills,  
 But as to a healer of them, king, we come,  
 Nor, if I have calamitously sped,  
 Need I thy chastisement and chiding, king,  
 No, but thine aid And if thou wilt not this,  
 I must content me with thy choice —what help?  
 Come, aged dames, depart —yet leave ye here  
 The grey-green boughs to roof the altar o'er,<sup>1</sup>  
 Calling to witness heaven and earth, Demeter,  
 Fire-bearing Goddess, and the Sun-god's light,  
 That naught our prayers unto the Gods availed

260

CHORUS

[On thine head be it, grandson thou of Pittheus]  
 Old Pelops' son! Lo, we of Pelops' land  
 The selfsame blood ancestral share with thee

ÆTHRA

How?—wilt thou flout these prayers, cast forth the  
 land

Grey mothers, which have gained of thee dues naught?  
 Nay, nay!—the beast finds refuge in the rock,  
 The slave at the Gods' altars, and a state  
 Storm-tossed must cower beneath another's lee,  
 For in man's lot naught prospereth to the end

270

CHORUS

(Str)

O thou afflicted, arise from Peisephone's hallowed  
 floor, [thine hands, and implore  
 Rise thou, and bow at his knees, flinging round them  
 That he rescue the clay of my dead, my beloved—ah,  
 woe is me, woe!— [in dust lying low  
 Of the sons I have lost, under ramparts of Cadmus

<sup>1</sup> If the petitioner's prayer was granted, he carried away with him his suppliant-bough, if not, he left it on the altar

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἰώ μοι· λάβετε φέρετε πέμπετε αἰίρετε<sup>1</sup> μεσφδ.  
ταλαίνας χέρας γεραιάς.

πρός σε γενειάδος, ὦ φίλος, ὦ δοκιμώτατος  
Ἑλλάδι,

ἄντομαι ἀμφιπύτνουσα τὸ σὸν γόνυ καὶ χέρα  
δειλαία

280 οἴκτισαι ἀμφὶ τέκνων μ' ἰκέταν τιν' ἀλάταν  
οἴκτρὸν ἰάλεμον οἴκτρὸν ἰεῖσαν,

ἄντ.

μηδ' ἀτάφους, τέκνον, ἐν χθονὶ Κάδμου χάρματα  
θηρῶν

παῖδας ἐν ἀλικίᾳ τῇ σῇ κατίδης, ἰκετεύω  
βλέψον ἐμῶν βλεφάρων ἔπι δάκρυον, ἃ περὶ  
σοῖσι

γούνασιν ὧδε πύτνω, τέκνοις τάφον ἐξανύσασθαι

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μῆτερ, τί κλαίεις λέπτ' ἐπ' ὀμμάτων φάρη  
βαλοῦσα τῶν σῶν, ἄρα δυστήνους γόους  
κλύουσα τῶνδε; καὶ μὲ γὰρ διήλθ' ἐτι  
ἔπαιρε λευκὸν κρᾶτα, μὴ δακρυρροεῖ

290 σεμναῖσι Διοῦς ἐσχάrais παρημένη

ΑΙΘΡΑ

αἰαί.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὰ τούτων οὐχὶ σοὶ στενακτέον

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ὦ τλήμονες γυναῖκες

<sup>1</sup> Hermann for MSS κρίνετε

## SUPPLIANTS

(*Mesode*)

Woe for me!—clasp me, uplift me, help onward,  
upholding

The palsied hand of the woe-forspent!  
By thy beard, O thou chiefest of champions of  
Hellas, O friend, I beseech thee,  
In the clasp of the wretched thy knees and thy  
fingers enfolding!

Pity me, for my children in suppliance bent 280  
Like a beggar I bow let my pitiful, pitiful out-  
cryings reach thee!

(*Ant*)

Ah, not unburied on Cadmus's soil, for a ravin and glee  
Unto beasts of the wold do thou leave them, the  
young men like unto thee!

O look on the tears from mine eyes that are stream-  
ing!—and all that I crave  
Falling low at thy knees, is a grave—that thou win  
for my sons but a grave!

THESEUS

Mother, why weepest thou, before thine eyes  
Casting thy fine-spun veil? Dost weep to hear  
Their mournful wails? Sooth, mine own heart was  
thrilled

Raise thy white head, be not a fount of tears,  
There sitting at Demeter's holy hearth

290

AETHRA

Ah me!

THESEUS

'Tis not for thee to wail their woes

AETHRA

Oh hapless dames!

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔφυς.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

εἴπω τι, τέκνον, σοί τε καὶ πόλει καλόν ,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὥς πολλά γ' ἐστὶ καπὸ θηλειῶν σοφά

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἰς ὅκνον μοι μῦθος ὃν κεύθω φέρει

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αἰσχρόν γ' ἔλεξας, χρήστ' ἔπη κρύπτειν φίλους.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

- οὔτοι σιωπῶσ' εἶτα μέμφομαί ποτε  
τὴν νῦν σιωπὴν ὥς ἐσιγήθη κακῶς,  
οὐδ' ὥς ἀχρεῖον τὰς γυναῖκας εὖ λέγειν  
300 δείσας' ἀφήσω τῷ φόβῳ τοῦμόν καλόν  
ἐγὼ δέ σ', ὦ παῖ, πρῶτα μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν  
σκοπεῖν κελεύω μὴ σφαλῆς ἀτιμάσας  
τᾶλλ' εὖ φρονῶν γάρ, ἐν μόνῳ τούτῳ ὀφάλης  
πρὸς τοῖσδε δ', εἰ μὲν μὴ ἀδικουμένοις ἐχρῆν  
τολμηρὸν εἶναι, κάρτ' ἂν εἶχον ἡσύχως  
νυνὶ δέ σοί τε τοῦτο τὴν τιμὴν φέρει  
κάμοι παραινεῖν οὐ φόβον φέρει, τέκνον,  
ἄνδρας βιαίους καὶ κατείργοντας νεκροὺς  
τάφου τε μοίρας καὶ κτερισμάτων λαχεῖν  
310 εἰς τήνδ' ἀνάγκην σῇ καταστήναι χερί,  
νόμιμά τε πάσης συγχέοντας Ἑλλάδος  
παῦσαι τὸ γάρ τοι συνέχον ἀνθρώπων πόλεις  
τοῦτ' ἔσθ', ὅταν τις τοὺς νόμους σφάζῃ καλῶς.  
ἐρεῖ δέ δή τις ὥς ἀνανδρία χερῶν,  
πόλει παρόν σοι στέφανον εὐκλείας λαβεῖν,  
δείσας ἀπέστης, καὶ συνὸς μὲν ἀγρίου

## SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Thou art not of their blood

AETHRA

Son, may I speak for thine and Athens' honour ?

THESEUS

Yea, even from women's lips much wisdom flows

AETHRA

Yet—yet, it gives me pause, the word I hide

THESEUS

Nay, this were shame, to hide good rede from friends

AETHRA

I will not hold my peace, to blame hereafter  
Myself for coward silence of this day,  
Nor, cowed by that taunt, "Woman's best advice  
Is worthless," will refrain my lips from good 300  
My son, I bid thee look to this first, lest  
Thou en, despising their appeal to heaven  
In this alone thou en'st, in all else wise

Nay more—I had endured, and murmured not,  
Wert thou not *bound* to champion the oppressed  
Lo, this is the foundation of thy fame,  
Therefore I fear not to exhort thee, son,  
That thou wouldst lay thy strong constraining hand  
On men of violence which refuse the dead  
The dues of burial and of funeral-rites, 310  
And quell the folk that would confound all wont  
Of Hellas for the bond of all men's states  
Is this, when they with honour hold by law

Ay, some will say faint heart made feeble hand,  
That to win Athens glory's crown was thine,  
Yet didst thou flinch for fear, that thou didst close

## ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ἀγῶνος ἥψω φαῦλον ἀθλήσας πόνον,  
 οὐδ' εἰς κράνος βλέψαντα καὶ λόγχης ἀκμὴν  
 320 χρῆν ἐκπονήσαι, δειλὸς ὢν ἐφηυρέθης  
 μὴ δῆτ' ἐμός γ' ὢν, ὦ τέκνον, δράσης τάδε·  
 ὀράς, ἄβουλος ὥς κεκερτομημένη  
 τοῖς κερτομοῦσι γοργὸν ὄμμ' ἀναβλέπει  
 σὴ πατρίς, ἐν γὰρ τοῖς πόνοισιν αὖξεται  
 αἱ δ' ἥσυχοι σκοτεινὰ πράσσουσιν πόλεις  
 σκοτεινὰ καὶ βλέπουσιν εὐλαβούμεναι  
 οὐκ εἰ νεκροῖσι καὶ γυναιξὶν ἀθλίαις  
 προσωφελήσων, ὦ τέκνον, κεχρημέναις,  
 ὥς οὔτε ταρβῶ σὺν δίκη σ' ὀρμώμενον,  
 330 Κάδμου θ' ὀρώσα λαὸν εὖ πεπραγόντα,  
 ἔτ' αὐτὸν ἄλλα βλήματ' ἐν κύβοις βαλεῖν  
 πέποιθ' ὁ γὰρ θεὸς πάντ' ἀναστρέφει πάλιν

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτη μοι, τῷδέ τ' εἴρηκας καλῶς  
 καὶ μοί· διπλοῦν δέ χάρμα γίγνεται τόδε.

### ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐμοὶ λόγοι μέν, μῆτερ, οἱ λελεγμένοι  
 ὀρθῶς ἔχουσ' εἰς τόνδε, κάπεφηνάμην  
 γνώμην ὑφ' οἷων ἐσφάλη βουλευμάτων·  
 ὀρώ δὲ καὶ γὰρ ταῦθ' ἅπερ με νουθετεῖς,  
 ὥς τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν οὐχὶ πρόσφορον τρόποις  
 340 φεύγειν τὰ δεινὰ. πολλὰ γὰρ δράσας καλὰ,  
 ἔθος τόδ' εἰς Ἑλληνας ἐξεδειξάμην,  
 αἰεὶ κολαστῆς τῶν κακῶν καθεστάναι  
 οὐκ οὖν ἀπαυδᾷν δυνατόν ἐστί μοι πόνους  
 τί γάρ μ' ἐροῦσιν οἳ γε δυσμενεῖς βροτῶν,  
 ὅθ' ἡ τεκοῦσα χυπερορρωδοῦσ' ἐμοῦ

## SUPPLIANTS

In strife of little toil with that wild swine,<sup>1</sup>  
But when behoved to face the helm, bear brunt  
Of the spear's point, a craven wert thou found  
Ah, do not so, my son, as thou art mine !  
Hast marked—bemocked for reckless policy,  
How on the mockers glares with fierce bright eyes  
Thy country ?—in her energy is her life

320

But states which work in darkness, cautelous,  
Grope in the darkness, for their caution's meed  
What, to the dead, and women misery-worn  
Wilt thou not bring help, son, in this their strait ?  
I fear naught justice is with thine essay,  
And, though the folk of Cadmus prosper now,  
Far otherwise yet for them the dice of doom  
Shall fall, I trust —God bringeth low the proud

330

### CHORUS

O best-beloved, well hast thou said, for him  
And me alike ; herein is twofold joy

### THESEUS

Mother, the words I spake were words of truth  
Unto this man, wherein I showed my mind  
Touching the counsels by the which he fell  
Yet these thy warnings—yea, I see their force,  
That with my life's use it accordeth not  
To flinch from peril Many a glorious deed  
Hath shown to sons of Hellas this my wont,  
Ever to be a punisher of wrong

340

Toil's challenge therefore cannot I refuse  
For what will they which hate me say of me,  
When she that bare me—who, beyond all, fears

<sup>1</sup> Phaea, the wild sow of Krommyon, slain by Theseus

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

πρώτη κελεύεις τόνδ' ὑποστῆναι πόνον ,  
 δράσω τάδ' εἰμι καὶ νεκροὺς ἐκλύσομαι  
 λόγοισι πείθων· εἰ δὲ μή, βία δορὸς  
 ἤδη τόδ' ἔσται κούχλι σὺν φθόνῳ θεῶν.  
 350 δόξαι δὲ χρήζω καὶ πόλει πάσῃ τόδε.  
 δόξει δ' ἐμοῦ θέλοντος· ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου  
 προσδούς ἔχοιμ' ἂν δῆμον εὐμενέστερον.  
 καὶ γὰρ κατέστησ' αὐτὸν εἰς μοναρχίαν  
 ἐλευθερώσας τήνδ' ἰσόψηφον πόλιν.  
 λαβὼν δ' Ἄδραστον δείγμα τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων,  
 εἰς πλήθος ἀστῶν εἰμι· καὶ πείσας τάδε,  
 λεκτοὺς ἀθροίσας δεῦρ' Ἀθηναίων κόρους  
 ἤξω· παρ' ὅπλοις θ' ἤμενος πέμψω λόγους  
 Κρέοντι νεκρῶν σώματ' ἐξαιτούμενος  
 360 ἀλλ' ὦ γεραιαί, σέμν' ἀφαιρεῖτε στέφη  
 μητρός, πρὸς οἴκους ὧς νιν Αἰγέως ἄγω,  
 φίλην προσάψας χεῖρα τοῖς τεκούσι γὰρ  
 δύστηνος ὅστις μὴ ἀντιδουλεύει τέκνων.  
 κάλλιστον ἔρανον δούς γὰρ ἀντιλάζυται  
 παίδων παρ' αὐτοῦ τοιάδ' ἂν τοκεῦσι δῶ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'  
 ἰππόβοτον Ἄργος, ὦ πάτριον ἐμὸν πέδον,  
 ἐκλύετε τάδ' ἐκλύετ' ἄνακτος  
 ὅσια περὶ θεοὺς καὶ μεγάλη Πελασγία  
 καὶ κατ' Ἄργος  
ἀντ. α  
 εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τέρμα καὶ τὸ πλέον ἐμῶν κακῶν  
 370 ἰκόμενος ἔτι ματέρος ἄγαλμα  
 φόνιον ἐξέλοι, γὰρ δὲ φίλιον Ἰνάχου  
 θεῖτ' ὀνήσας.



## SUPPLIANTS

For me,—first bids me undertake this toil?  
 I will unto the deed, redeem then dead  
 By fair words, if I may, if not, the might  
 Of spears shall do it, nor the Gods shall grudge  
 Yet I require all Athens' sanction here.  
 My wish should win their sanction, yet, if I 350  
 Show cause withal, the loyaller shall they be  
 For I have made the land one single realm,  
 A free state, with an equal vote for all  
 Adiaslus for my witness will I take,  
 And meet then concourse, then consenting won,  
 With muster of chosen youths Athenian  
 Will I return, and tarrying under arms,  
 Will send to Cleon, asking back the dead  
 But ye, grey women, from my mother take  
 The holy wreaths, that I may clasp her hand, 360  
 And lead to Aegeus' halls A sorry son  
 Is he that pays not service-debt to parents  
 Who giveth of love's best, by his own sons  
 For all he hath given his parents is repaid

[*Exeunt* THESEUS and AETHRA

CHORUS

(*Str* 1)

O Argos, mead of the battle-steed, O land where my  
 fathers abode of yore, [the hero-king,  
 Ye have heard it, heard in Heaven was the word of  
 His sacred plight in Pelasgia's sight, the pledge to be  
 published all Argos o'er

(*Ant* 1)

O may he gain—yea, more than attain to the goal  
 that seeth my miseries end! [mother to bring  
 Forth let him go, let him wrest from the foe, to the 370•  
 Her darling's clay blood-stained, and for aye have  
 our own dear Inachus' land to friend

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

καλὸν δ' ἄγαλμα πόλεσιν εὖσεβῆς πόνος στρ β'  
 χάριν τ' ἔχει τὰν ἐς αἰί.  
 τί μοι πόλις κρανεῖ ποτ', ἄρα φίλιά μοι  
 τεμεῖ, καὶ τέκνοις ταφὰς ληψόμεσθα ,

ἄμυνε ματρί, πόλις, ἄμυνε, Παλλάδος, ἀντ. β'  
 νόμους βροτῶν μὴ μιαίνειν.  
 σύ τοι σέβεις δίκαν, τὸ δ' ἦσσον ἀδικίᾳ  
 380 νέμεις, δυστυχῇ τ' αἰὲ πάντα ρύει.

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τέχνην μὲν αἰὲ τήνδ' ἔχων ὑπηρετεῖς  
 πόλει τε κάμοί, διαφέρων κηρύγματα·  
 ἐλθὼν δ' ὑπέρ τ' Ἀσωπὸν Ἴσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ  
 σεμνῷ τυράννῳ φράζε Καδμείων τάδε·  
 Θησεύς σ' ἀπαιτεῖ πρὸς χάριν θάψαι νεκρούς,  
 συγγείτον' οἰκῶν γαῖαν, ἀξιῶν τυχεῖν,  
 φίλον τε θέσθαι πάντ' Ἐρεχθιδῶν λεῶν.  
 καὶ μὲν θέλωσιν αἰνέσαι, παλίσσυτος  
 στεῖχ' ἦν δ' ἀπιστῶσ', οἷδε δεῦτεροι λόγοι  
 390 κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον.  
 στρατὸς δὲ θάσσει κάξετάζεται παρὼν  
 Καλλίχορον ἀμφὶ σεμνὸν εὐτρεπῆς ὅδε  
 καὶ μὴν ἐκοῦσά γ' ἀσμένη τ' ἐδέξατο  
 πόλις πόνον τόνδ', ὥς θέλονται μ' ἦσθετο  
 ἕα λόγων τίς ἐμποδῶν ὅδ' ἔρχεται ;  
 Καδμείος, ὥς ἔοικεν οὐ σάφ' εἰδότε

## SUPPLIANTS

(Str 2)

Memorial fan shall the cities share of the sacred labour  
of love evermore [lingering  
The grace thereof shall abide, and the love aye  
Ah, what shall come of their rede?—what doom?—  
shall Athens bestow the grace I implore?  
Shall she league her might with me, and the right of  
the tomb to my slaughtered sons restore?

(Ant 2)

O Pallas' Town, for my help step down, the holy  
cause of the mother defend, [thing  
So the laws of men shall be made not then a polluted  
Thou reverencest great Justice' hest injustice be-  
neath thy yoke shall bend  
And through all the lands thy champion hands to the  
helpless oppressed deliverance send 380

*Enter THESEUS with ATHENIAN HERALD*

THESEUS

O thou that usest still thine art to seive  
Athens and me, wide publishing mine hests,  
Pass thou Asopus and Ismenus' stream,  
And to the proud Cadmean despot say  
"Theseus of grace asks corpses for the tomb  
He dwells thy neighbour, and he claims but right  
So make thou the Erechtheid folk thy friend"  
If they consent to grant it, turn thou back  
If they refuse, my second message speak,  
"Look for my shielded revel-out of war!" 390  
Mine host is camped and marshalled hard at hand  
By sacred Callichorus for fight prepared.  
Yea, Athens of good will, and glad withal,  
Took up this task, made wae of my desire  
Ha!—breaking in upon my speech who comes?  
Theban, I deem, yet know not certainly —

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κῆρυξ. ἐπίσχεσ, ἣν σ' ἀπαλλάξῃ πόνου  
 μολῶν ὕπαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασιν

ΚΗΡΤΞ

400

τίς γῆς τύραννος ; πρὸς τίν' ἀγγεῖλαί με χρῆ  
 λόγους Κρέοντος, ὃς κρατεῖ Κάδμου χθονός,  
 Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος ἀμφ' ἐπταστόμους  
 πύλας ἀδελφοῦ χειρὶ Πολυνείκους ὕπο ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἤρξω τοῦ λόγου ψευδῶς, ξένε,  
 ζητῶν τύραννον ἐνθάδ· οὐ γὰρ ἄρχεται  
 ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρα πόλεις.  
 δῆμος δ' ἀνάσσει διαδοχαῖσιν ἐν μέρει  
 ἐνιαυσίαισιν, οὐχὶ τῷ πλούτῳ διδούς  
 τὸ πλεῖστον, ἀλλὰ χῶ πένης ἔχων ἴσον

ΚΗΡΤΞ

410

ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἐν πεσσοῖς δίδως  
 κρεῖσσον· πόλεις γὰρ ἥς ἐγὼ πάρεμ' ἀπο  
 ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, οὐκ ὄχλῳ κρατύνεται  
 οὐδ' ἔστιν αὐτὴν ὅστις ἐκχαυνῶν λόγοις  
 πρὸς κέρδος ἴδιον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε στρέφει·  
 ὃ δ' ἀντίχ' ἡδὺς καὶ διδούς πολλὴν χάριν,  
 εἰσαὐθις ἐβλαψ', εἴτα διαβολαῖς νέαις  
 κλέψας τὰ πρόσθε σφάλματ' ἐξέδυνε δίκης  
 ἄλλως τε πῶς ἂν μὴ διορθεύων λόγους  
 ὀρθῶς δύναιτ' ἂν δῆμος εὐθύνειν πόλιν ,  
 ὃ γὰρ χρόνος μάθησιν ἀντὶ τοῦ τάχους

420

κρεῖσσω δίδωσι γαπόνος δ' ἀνὴρ πένης  
 εἰ καὶ γένοιτο μὴ ἀμαθής, ἔργων ὕπο  
 οὐκ ἂν δύναιτο πρὸς τὰ κοῖν' ἀποβλέπειν.  
 ἦ δὴ νοσῶδες τοῦτο τοῖς ἀμείνοσιν,  
 ὅταν ποινηρὸς ἀξιώμ' ἀνὴρ ἔχῃ  
 γλώσση κατασχὼν δῆμον, οὐδὲν ὦν τὸ πρίν.

## SUPLIANTS

A herald <sup>1</sup>—stay thy toil perchance is spared  
His coming meets my purpose in mid way

*Enter THEBAN HERALD*

HERALD

Your despot, who ?—to whom must I proclaim  
The words of Creon, lord of Cadmus' land 400  
Since Eteocles by the hand was slain  
Of Polyneices by the sevenfold gates ?

THESEUS

First, stranger, with false note thy speech began,  
Seeking a despot here. Our state is ruled  
Not of one only man Athens is free  
Hei people in the order of their course  
Rule year by year, bestowing on the rich  
Advantage none, the poor hath equal right

HERALD

One vantage hast thou given me, as to one  
That playeth daughts.—the city whence I come 410  
By one man, not by any mob, is swayed  
There is none there who, slaving them with talk,  
This way and that way twists them for his gain,  
Is popular now, and humours all their bent,  
Now, laying on others blame for mischief done,  
He cloaks his faults, and slips through justice' net

How should the mob which reason all awry  
Have power to pilot straight a nation's course ?  
For time bestoweth better lessoning  
Than haste But yon poor delver of the ground, 420  
How shrewd soe'er, by reason of his toil  
Can nowise oversee the general weal.  
Realm-ruining in the wise man's sight is this,  
When the vile tonguester getteth himself a name  
By wooing mobs, who heretofore was naught

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κομφός γ' ὁ κήρυξ καὶ παρεργάτης λόγων  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀγῶνα καὶ σὺ τόνδ' ἠγωνίσω,  
 ἄκου' · ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων.  
 οὐδὲν τυράννου δυσμενέστερον πόλει,  
 430 ὅπου τὸ μὲν πρῶτιστον οὐκ εἰσὶν νόμοι  
 κοινοί, κρατεῖ δ' εἰς τὸν νόμον κεκτημένος  
 αὐτὸς παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ τόδ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἴσον.  
 γεγραμμένων δὲ τῶν νόμων ὃ τ' ἀσθενής  
 ὁ πλούσιός τε τὴν δίκην ἴσην ἔχει,  
 ἔστιν δ' ἐνισπεῖν τοῖσιν ἀσθενεστέροις  
 τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα ταῦθ', ὅταν κλύῃ κακῶς  
 νικᾷ δ' ὁ μείων τὸν μέγαν δίκαι' ἔχων  
 τοῦλεύθερον δ' ἐκείνο · Τίς θέλει πόλει  
 440 χρηστόν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων,  
 καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χρήζων λαμπρός ἐσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων  
 σιγᾷ. τί τούτων ἔστ' ἰσαίτερον πόλει,  
 καὶ μὴν ὅπου γε δῆμος εὐθυντῆς χθονός,  
 ὑποῦσιν ἀστοῖς ἥδεται νεανίαις ·  
 ἀνὴρ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἐχθρὸν ἠγεῖται τόδε,  
 καὶ τοὺς ἀρίστους, οὓς ἂν ἠγῆται φρονεῖν  
 κτείνει, δεδοικῶς τῆς τυραννίδος πέρι  
 πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἂν ἰσχυρὰ πόλις,  
 ὅταν τις ὥς λειμῶνος ἡρινοῦ στάχυν  
 450 τόλμας ἀφαιρῇ κάπολωτίῃ νέους,  
 κτᾶσθαι δὲ πλούτου καὶ βίον τί δεῖ τέκνοις,  
 ὥς τῷ τυράνῳ πλείον' ἐκμοχθῇ βίον,  
 ἢ παρθενεύειν παῖδας ἐν δόμοις καλῶς  
 τερπνὰς τυράννοις ἡδονάς, ὅταν θέλῃ,  
 δάκρυα δ' ἐτοιμάζουσι, μὴ ζῶην ἔτι,

## SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

An eloquent herald this, a speech-crammed babbler !  
But, since thou hast plunged into this strife, hear  
me — [parley —

'Twas thou flung'st down this challenge unto  
No worse foe than the despot hath a state,  
Under whom, first, can be no common laws, 430

But one rules, keeping in his private hands  
The law so is equality no more

But when the laws are written, then the weak  
And wealthy have alike but equal right  
Yea, even the weaker may fling back the scoff  
Against the prosperous, if he be reviled ,  
And, armed with right, the less o'ercomes the great  
Thus Freedom speaks<sup>1</sup> — "What man deserves to bring  
Good counsel for his country to the people ?"

Who chooseth this, is famous who will not, 440  
Keeps silence Can equality further go ?

More—when the people piloteth the land,  
She joyeth in young champions native-born :  
But in a king's eyes this is hatefullest ,  
Yea, the land's best, whose wisdom he discerns,  
He slayeth, fearing lest they shake his throne  
How can a state be established then in strength,  
When, even as sweeps the scythe o'er springtide  
mead,

One lops the brave young hearts like flower-blooms ?  
What boots it to win wealth and store for sons, 450  
When all one's toil but swells a despot's hoard ?  
Or to rear maiden daughters virtuously  
To be a king's sweet morsels at his will,  
And tears to them that dressed this dish for him ?

<sup>1</sup> He quotes the formula with which the herald opened the proceedings of the popular assembly at Athens

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

εἰ τὰμὰ τέκνα πρὸς βίαν νυμφεύσεται  
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πρὸς τὰ σὰ ἐξηκόντισα  
ἤκεις δὲ δὴ τί τῆσδε γῆς κεχρημένος ,  
κλαίων γ' ἂν ἦλθες, εἰ σε μὴ ᾿πεμψεν πόλις,  
περισσὰ φωνῶν· τὸν γὰρ ἄγγελον χρεὼν  
460 λέξανθ' ὅς' ἂν τάξῃ τις ὡς τάχος πάλιν  
χωρεῖν. τὸ λοιπὸν δ' εἰς ἐμὴν πόλιν Κρέων  
ἦσσον λάλον σου πεμπέτω τιν' ἄγγελον

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· κακοῖσιν ὡς ὅταν δαίμων διδῷ  
καλῶς, ὑβρίζουσ' ὡς αἰὲν πράξοντες εὖ.

## ΚΗΡΤΞ

λέγοιμ' ἂν ἤδη. τῶν μὲν ἡγωνισμένων  
σοὶ μὲν δοκείτω ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δὲ τάντ'ια  
ἐγὼ δ' ἀπαυδῶ πᾶς τε Καδμείος λεῶς  
᾿Αδραστος εἰς γῆν τήνδε μὴ παριέναι  
εἰ δ' ἔστιν ἐν γῇ, πρὶν θεοῦ δύναι σέλας,  
470 λύσαντα σεμνὰ στεμμάτων μυστήρια  
τῆσδ' ἐξελαύνειν, μηδ' ἀναιρεῖσθαι νεκροὺς  
βίᾳ, προσήκοντ' οὐδὲν Ἀργείων πόλει.  
κἂν μὲν πίθῃ μοι, κυμάτων ἄτερ πόλιν  
σὴν ναυστολήσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, πολλὺς κλύδων  
ἡμῖν τε καὶ σοὶ συμμάχοις τ' ἔσται δορός.  
σκέψαι δὲ, καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἐμοῖς θυμούμενος  
λόγοισιν, ὡς δὴ πόλιν ἐλευθέραν ἔχων,  
σφριγῶντ' ἀμείψῃ μῦθον ἐκ βραχιόνων.  
ἐλπὶς γάρ ἐστ' ἀπιστον, ἢ πολλὰς πόλεις  
480 συνῆψ', ἄγουσα θυμὸν εἰς ὑπερβολὰς  
ὅταν γὰρ ἔλθῃ πόλεμος εἰς ψῆφον λεῶ,  
οὐδεὶς ἔθ' αὐτοῦ θάνατον ἐκλογίζεται,  
τὸ δυστυχὲς δὲ τοῦτ' ἐς ἄλλον ἐκτρέπει  
εἰ δ' ἦν παρ' ὄμμα θάνατος ἐν ψήφου φορᾷ,



## SUPPLIANTS

May I die ere I see my daughters ravished '  
Such answering shaft to thine do I hurl back  
But thou, what wouldst thou have of this our land ?  
Except thy state had sent thee, thou shouldst rue  
Thine insolent prating ' 'Tis the herald's part  
To speak his message, and to get him back 460  
With speed Henceforth let Creon to my town  
Send a less wordy messenger than thee

### CHORUS

Out on it ' When God prospereth evil men,  
Wanton they wax, as who should prosper aye

### HERALD

Now will I speak my charge For our dispute,  
Be this thy mind, contrariwise be mine  
But I and all the folk Cadmean warn thee—  
Receive Adrastus not into this land  
If in the land he is, ere set of sun  
Free from yon wreaths your sacred Mysteries, 470  
And drive him forth, nor go about by force  
To take those dead ye have naught to do with  
Argos

If thou obey me, thou by storm unscathed  
Shalt helm thy city, if not, our great surge  
Of war on thee and thine allies shall fall

Look to it, nor, being chafed at these my words,—  
Because forsooth a city free thou hast,—  
Make arrogant answer from a weaker cause  
Hope is delusive many a state hath this  
Embroided, by kindling it to mad emprise 480  
For, when for war a nation casteth votes,  
Then of his own death no man taketh count,  
But passeth on to his neighbour this mischance  
But, were death full in view when votes were cast,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

οὐκ ἂν ποθ' Ἑλλὰς δοριμανῆς ἀπώλλυτο.  
καίτοι δυοῖν γε πάντες ἄνθρωποι λόγοιν  
τὸν κρείσσον' ἴσμεν καὶ τὰ χρηστὰ καὶ κακά,  
ὅσῳ τε πολέμον κρείσσον εἰρήνην βροτοῖς·  
ἢ πρῶτα μὲν Μουσαιοι προσφιλεστάτη,  
490 Ποιναιῖσι δ' ἐχθρά, τέρπεται δ' εὐπαιδία,  
χαίρει δὲ πλούτῳ. ταῦτ' ἀφέντες οἱ κακοὶ  
πολέμους ἀναιρούμεσθα καὶ τὸν ἥσσανα  
δουλούμεθ', ἄνδρες ἄνδρα καὶ πόλιν πόλιν  
σὺ δ' ἄνδρας ἐχθροὺς καὶ θανόντας ὠφελεῖς,  
θάπτων κομίζων θ' ὕβρις οὖς ἀπώλεσεν  
οὐ τάρ' ἔτ' ὀρθῶς Καπανέως κεραύνιον  
δέμας καπνοῦται, κλιμάκων ὀρθοστάτας  
ὃς προσβαλὼν πύλαισιν ὤμοσεν πόλιν  
500 πέρσειν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἦν τε μὴ θέλῃ,  
οὐδ' ἤρπασεν χάρυβδις οἰωνοσκόπον,  
τέθριππον ἄρμα περιβαλοῦσα χάσματι,  
ἄλλοι τε κεύνται πρὸς πύλαις λοχαγέται  
πέτροις καταξανθέντες ὀστέων ῥαφάς  
ἢ νυν φρονεῖν ἄμεινον ἐξαύχει Διός,  
ἢ θεοὺς δικαίως τοὺς κακοὺς ἀπολλύναι.  
φιλεῖν μὲν οὖν χρή τοὺς σοφοὺς πρῶτον τέκνα,  
ἔπειτα τοκέας πατρίδα θ', ἦν αὔξειν χρεῶν  
καὶ μὴ κατὰξαι σφαλερὸν ἡγεμῶν θρασὺς  
νεὼς τε ναύτης· ἥσυχος καιρῷ σοφός.  
510 καὶ τοῦτό τοι τάνδρεῖον, ἢ προμηθία.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐξαρκέσας ἦν Ζεὺς ὁ τιμωρούμενος,  
ὕμᾱς δ' ὕβριζειν οὐκ ἐχρήν τοιάνδ' ὕβριν.

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ παγκάκιστε—

## SUPPLIANTS

Never war-frenzied Greece would rush on ruin  
 Yet, of elections twain, we know—all know—  
 Whether is best, the blessing or the curse,  
 And how much better is peace for men than war,  
 Peace, she which is the Muses' chiefest friend,  
 But Retribution's foe, joys in fair children, 490  
 In wealth delights    Fools let these blessings slip,  
 And rush on war · man bringeth weaker man  
 To bondage, city is made city's thiall  
 Thou helpst men our foes, and dead men they,  
 Wouldst win for graves them whom their insolence  
     slew !

Good sooth, then, wrongfully did levin blast  
 Capaneus' frame upon yon ladder's height,  
 Which he had reared against our gates, and swore  
 To sack the town, whether God willed or no  
 Wrongly earth's chasm snatched from sight the seer, 500  
 Shrouding with yawning gulf his four-horse car,  
 While other captains lie before our gates,  
 The knittings of whose bones great stones have  
     shattered !

Or boast thee to surpass in wisdom Zeus,  
 Or grant that rightly Gods destroy the wicked  
 Behoves the wise to love his children first,  
 Parents and country next,—to make her great,  
 Not break her down    Rash leaders, pilots heady,  
 Mean ruin    the wise in season sitteth still  
 This too is manful valour, even discretion 510

### CHORUS

The punishment of Zeus might well suffice !  
 Shall ye insult with wanton arrogance ?

### ADRASTUS

Villain of villains !—

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σὺγ', Ἀδραστ', ἔχε στόμα  
 καὶ μὴ ἴπιπροσθεν τῶν ἐμῶν τοὺς σοὺς λόγους  
 θῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἦκει πρὸς σέ κηρύσσων ὅδε,  
 ἀλλ' ὥς ἔμ' ἡμᾶς ἀποκρίνασθαι χρεῶν.  
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν σε πρὸς τὰ πρῶτ' ἀμείψομαι.  
 οὐκ οἶδ' ἐγὼ Κρέοντα δεσπύζοντ' ἐμοῦ  
 οὐδὲ σθένοντα μεῖζον, ὥστ' ἀναγκάσαι  
 520 δρᾶν τὰς Ἀθήνας ταύτ' ἄνω γὰρ ἂν ῥέοι  
 τὰ πράγμαθ' οὕτως, εἰ ἴπιταξόμεσθα δῆ.  
 πόλεμον δὲ τοῦτον οὐκ ἐγὼ καθίσταμαι,  
 ὃς οὐδὲ σὺν τοῖσδ' ἦλθον εἰς Κιάδμου χθόνα  
 νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς θανόντας, οὐ βλάπτων πόλιν  
 οὐδ' ἀνδροκμήτας προσφέρων ἀγωνίας,  
 θάψαι δικαίῳ, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον  
 σφύζων τί τούτων ἐστὶν οὐ καλῶς ἔχον,  
 εἰ γὰρ τι καὶ πεπόνθατ' Ἀργείων ὕπο,  
 τεθνᾶσιν, ἡμύνασθε πολεμίους καλῶς,  
 530 αἰσχροῦς δ' ἐκείνοις, χῆ δίκη διοίχεται.  
 ἔασατ' ἤδη γῇ καλυφθῆναι νεκρούς,  
 ὅθεν δ' ἕκαστον εἰς τὸ φῶς ἀφίκετο,  
 ἐνταῦθ' ἀπελθεῖν, πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,  
 τὸ σῶμα δ' εἰς γῆν οὐτι γὰρ κεκτῆμεθα  
 ἡμέτερον αὐτὸ πλὴν ἐνοικῆσαι βίον,  
 κάπειτα τὴν θρέψασαν αὐτὸ δεῖ λαβεῖν.  
 δοκεῖς κακουργεῖν Ἀργος οὐ θάπτων νεκρούς,  
 ἥκιστα· πάσης Ἑλλάδος κοινὸν τόδε,  
 εἰ τοὺς θανόντας νοσφίσας ὦν χρεὴν λαχεῖν  
 540 ἀτάφους τις ἔξει· δειλίαν γὰρ εἰσφέρει  
 τοῖς ἀλκίμοισιν, οὗτος ἦν τεθῆ νόμος  
 κάμοι μὲν ἦλθες δεῖν' ἀπειλήσων ἔπη,  
 νεκροὺς δὲ ταρβεῖτ', εἰ κρυβήσονται χθονί,

## SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Hold, Adrastus, peace,  
And thrust not in before my words thine own,  
For not to thee yon fellow doth his message,  
But unto me 'tis I must make reply  
Now, thy first utterance will I answer first —  
I know no Cæon despot over me,  
Nor more of might than I, that he should force  
Athens to do this    Sourceward back should flow    520  
The world's stream, if we brook such hest as his,  
It is not I that launch upon this war,  
Seeing with these I sought not Cadmus' land

But lifeless bodies—harming not your state,  
Nor thrusting man-destroying strife on her,—  
I claim to bury lo, all Hellas' law  
Do I uphold    How is not this well done?  
For if of Aïgives ye have suffered aught,  
They are dead    with glory ye hurled back your foes,  
With shame to them—but there your right hath  
end    530

Let now the dead be hidden in the earth,  
And each part, whence it came forth to the light,  
Thither return, the breath unto the air,  
To earth the body, for we hold it not  
In fee, but only to pass life therein,  
Then she which fostered it must take it back

Dost think thou woundest Argos through her dead?  
Not so    the common cause of Greece is this,  
If one shall rob the dead of rightful dues,  
And hold them from the tomb    this shall unman    540  
Even heroes, if such law shall be ordained  
And to me comest thou to bluster threats,  
While ye fear corpses, if they be entombed?

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

τί μὴ γένηται, μὴ κατασκάψωσι γῆν  
 ταφέντες ὑμῶν, ἣ τέκν' ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς  
 φύσωσιν, ἐξ ὧν εἰσὶ τις τιμωρία,  
 σκαιὸν γε τὰνάλωμα τῆς γλώσσης τόδε,  
 φόβους πονηροὺς καὶ κενοὺς δεδοικέναι  
 550 ἄλλ' ὦ μάταιοι, γνῶτε τὰνθρώπων κακά·  
 παλαίσμαθ' ἡμῶν ὁ βίος· εὐτυχοῦσι δὲ  
 οἱ μὲν τάχ', οἱ δ' ἐσαῦθις, οἱ δ' ἤδη βροτῶν.  
 τρυφᾷ δ' ὁ δαίμων πρὸς τε γὰρ τοῦ δυστυχοῦς,  
 ὡς εὐμενῆς ἦ, τίμιος γεραίρεται,  
 ὃ τ' ὀλβιὸς νιν πνεῦμα δειμαίνων λιπεῖν  
 ὑψηλὸν αἶρει. γνόντας οὖν χρεῶν τάδε  
 ἀδικουμένους τε μέτρια μὴ θυμῷ φέρειν  
 ἀδικεῖν τε τοιαῦθ' οἷα μὴ βλάψῃ πόλιν  
 πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴη, τοὺς ὀλωλότας νεκροὺς  
 560 θάψαι δόθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς θέλουσιν εὐσεβεῖν  
 ἣ δῆλα τὰνθένδ'· εἰμι καὶ θάψω βίᾳ  
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' εἰς Ἑλληνας ἐξοισθήσεται  
 ὡς εἰς ἔμ' ἐλθὼν καὶ πόλιν Πανδίωνος  
 νόμος παλαιὸς δαιμόνων διεφθάρη.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει τὸ γάρ τοι τῆς Δίκης σφύζων φάος,  
 πολλοὺς ὑπεκφύγοις ἂν ἀνθρώπων ψόγους.

## ΚΗΡΤΞ

βούλει συνάψω μῦθον ἐν βραχεῖ σέθεν,

## ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

λέγ', εἴ τι βούλει καὶ γὰρ οὐ σιγηλὸς εἶ.

## ΚΗΡΤΞ

οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἐκ γῆς παῖδας Ἀργείων λάβοις.

## ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κάμοῦ νυν ἀντάκουσον, εἰ βούλει, πάλιν.

## SUPPLIANTS

What fear ye? Lest they undermine your land,  
There buried?—or in earth's dark womb beget  
Children, of whom shall vengeance fall on you?  
'Twere idle waste of speech, good sooth, to unmask  
Your catiff terrors and your empty fears!  
O fools, learn ye the real ills of men —  
Our life is conflict all of mortals some 550  
Succeed ere long, some late, and straightway  
some,

While Fortune sits a queen worship and honour  
The unblest gives her, so to see good days,  
The prosperous extols her, lest her breeze  
Fail him one day Remembering this, should we  
Meet wrong with calmness, not with fury of rage,  
Neither on one whole nation visit wrong

How shall it be then?—grant to us, who are fain  
To render heaven its due, to entomb the dead  
Else, clear is the issue this will I by force 560  
Never to Greeks shall it be said, that when  
It fell to me and Athens to uphold  
Heaven's ancient law, that law was set at naught

### CHORUS

Fear not while thou upholdest Justice' light,  
Thou shalt not fear what men can say of thee

### HERALD

Wouldst thou I summed up this thy claim in brief?

### THESEUS

Speak, an thou list: no tongue-tied wight art thou

### HERALD

Thou ne'er shalt win from our land Argos' sons

### THESEUS

Give ear to me in turn, then, if thou wilt

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

- 570 κλύοιμ' ἄν οὐ γὰρ ἄλλὰ δεῖ δοῦναι μέρος.  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 θάνῳ νεκροὺς γῆς ἐξελών Ἀσωπίας.  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 ἐν ἀσπίσιν σοι πρῶτα κινδυνευτέον.  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 πολλοὺς ἔτλην δὴ χᾶτέρους ἄλλους πόνους  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 ἦ πᾶσιν οὖν σ' ἔφυσεν ἐξαρκεῖν πατήρ,  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 ὅσοι γ' ὑβρισταί· χρηστὰ δ' οὐ κολλάζομεν.  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 πράσσειν σὺ πόλλ' εἴωθας ἥ τε σὴ πόλις.  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 τοιγὰρ πονούσῃ πολλὰ πόλλ' εὐδαίμονα.  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 ἔλθ', ὥς σε λόγῃ σπαρτὸς ἐν πόλει λάβῃ.  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 τίς δ' ἐκ δράκοντος θούρος ἂν γένοιτ' Ἄρης;  
 ΚΗΡΤΞ  
 580 γνώσει σὺ πάσχων νῦν δ' ἔτ' εἰ νεανίας.  
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ  
 οὔτοι μ' ἐπαρεῖς ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι φρένας  
 τοῖς σοῖσι κόμποις. ἀλλ' ἀποστέλλου χθονός,  
 λόγους ματαίους οὔσπερ ἡνέγκω λαβὼν  
 περαίνομεν γὰρ οὐδέν ὀρμᾶσθαι χρεὼν  
 πάντ' ἄνδρ' ὀπλίτην ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπεμβάτην,  
 μοναμπύκων τε φάλαρα κινεῖσθαι στόμα  
 ἀφρῶ καταστάζοντα, Καδμείαν χθόνα  
 χωρήσομαι γὰρ ἐπτά πρὸς Κάδμου πύλας



## SUPPLIANTS

HERALD

Yea—since I cannot choose but hear in turn 570

THESEUS

From thy land will I take and buy them

HERALD

First must thou face the hazard of the shield

THESEUS

Full many a harder emprise have I dared .

HERALD

A champion born to match him with all men !

THESEUS

All arrogant tyrants · I scourge not the right

HERALD

Ay, thou wilt still be meddling—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

Therefore, with much toil, much good speed is hers

HERALD

Come !—let the Dragon-seed but find thee there !

THESEUS

What valorous host should spring from dragons' teeth ?

HERALD

This shalt thou learn, and rue    Thou art yet but  
young 580

THESEUS

Tush, man, thou canst not move mine heart to wrath  
With all thy vauntings    Get thee forth the land ·  
The idle words thou broughtest, bear them back  
Naught comes of wrangling [Exit HERALD

Let each man-at-arms,

Each chariot-rider, and each battle-steed,  
Whose swinging cheek-plate dashes round his jaws  
The foam, charge onward into Cadmus' land  
For on to Cadmus' seven gates will I march,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

590 αὐτὸς σίδηρον ὄξυν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων  
αὐτός τε κῆρυξ σοὶ δὲ προστάσσω μένειν,  
Ἕδραστε, κάμοι μὴ ἀναμίγνυσθαι τύχας  
τὰς σάς· ἐγὼ γὰρ δαίμονος τοῦμοῦ μέτα  
στρατηλατήσω καινὸς ἐν καινῷ δορί  
ἐνὸς μόνου δεῖ, τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχειν, ὅσοι  
δίκην σέβονται· ταῦτα γὰρ ξυνόνθ' ὁμοῦ  
νίκην δίδωσιν ἀρετῇ δ' οὐδὲν φέρει  
βροτοῖσιν, ἣν μὴ τὸν θεὸν χρῆζοντ' ἔχῃ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α'

ὦ μέλειαι μελέων ματέρες λοχαγῶν, στρ α'  
ὥς μοι ὕψ' ἥπατι δεῖμα χλοερὸν ταρασσει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β'

600 τίν' αὐδὰν τάνδε προσφέρεις νέαν ,

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α'

στράτευμα παῖ Παλλάδος κριθήσεται.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β'

διὰ δορὸς εἶπας ἧ λόγων ξυναλλαγαῖς ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α'

γένοιτ' ἄν κέρδος· εἰ δ' ἀρείφατοι  
φόνοι, μάχαι, στερνοτυπεῖς τ' ἀνὰ τόπον  
πάλιν φανήσονται κτύποι,  
τίν' ἄν λόγον, τάλαινα,  
τίν' ἄν τῶνδ' αἰτία λάβοιμι ,

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β'

ἀλλὰ τὸν εὐτυχίᾳ λαμπρὸν ἄν τις αἰροῖ ἀντ. α'  
μοῖρα πάλιν· τόδε μοι τὸ θράσος ἀμφιβαίνει

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α'

610 δικαίους δαίμονας σύ γ' ἐννέπεις.

## SUPPLIANTS

Bearing myself the whetted steel in hand,  
 Myself mine herald Thee I bid remain, 590  
 Adiaustus . mingle not with mine thy fate  
 For I 'neath mine own fortune's star will lead  
 Mine host, a taintless chief with taintless spear  
 One only thing I need, all Gods to have  
 Which reverence right for where these are, they give  
 Victory Naked valour naught avails  
 To men, except it have the Gods' good will [Exit

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Str 1)

Ye hapless mothers of hapless chieftains dead,  
 Ah, how is mine heart stormed-tossed with pale  
 dismay—

HALF-CHORUS 2

What ominous word and strange of thee is said? 600

HALF-CHORUS 1

For the dread decision on Pallas' war-array !

HALF-CHORUS 2

Through battle, or peace-fraught parley, wouldst  
 thou say ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ay, this last should be well , but if warrior-quelling  
 Slaughters and battles again shall be seen,  
 With the beating of breasts in each desolate dwelling  
 Of the land, what reproaches bitter-keen [been !  
 Should I win, through whom this sorrow hath

HALF-CHORUS 2

(Ant 1)

Yet doom may the victor bring down low in dust ;  
 This comforteth me, and bids be dauntless-souled

HALF-CHORUS 1

Thou speakest of Gods that fail not, ever just 610

## ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τίνες γὰρ ἄλλοι νέμονται συμφοράς ,

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

διάφορα πολλὰ θεῶν βροτοῖσιν εἰσορῶ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

φόβῳ γὰρ τῷ πάρος διόλλυσαι·  
 δίκαι δίκαν δ' ἐκάλεσε καὶ φόνος  
 φόνου, κακῶν δ' ἀναψυχὰς  
 θεοὶ βροτοῖς νέμουσιν,  
 ἀπάντων τέρμ' ἔχοντες αὐτοί

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

τὰ καλλίπυργα πεδία πῶς ἰκοίμεθ' ἄν,      στρ. β'  
 Καλλίχορον θεᾶς ὕδωρ λιποῦσαι ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

620 ποτανὰν εἴ μέ τις θεῶν κτίσαι,  
 διπόταμον ἵνα πόλιν μόλῳ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

εἰδείης ἄν φίλων  
 εἰδείης ἄν τύχας

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τίς ποτ' αἶσα, τίς ἄρα πότμος  
 ἐπιμένει τὸν ἄλκιμον  
 τᾶσδε γᾶς ἄνακτα ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

κεκλημένους μὲν ἀνακαλούμεθ' αὖ θεούς      ἀντ. β'  
 ἀλλὰ φόβων πίστις ἄδε πρῶτα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τᾶς παλαιομάτορος  
 παιδογόνε πόριος Ἰνάχου

## SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 2

Of whom but of such be all our fates controlled ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah, many a change in God's ways I behold !

HALF-CHORUS 2

By the terrors o'erpast is the heart in thee stricken :

Yet justice aloud unto justice doth call ,

Blood calleth for blood, and the Gods shall requicken

Our souls, for to mortals all blessings befall

From the hands that encompass the goal of all

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Str* 2)

O might I speed from the Goddess's springs,

Even Callichorus, to the fair-towered plain !

HALF-CHORUS 2

O would the Gods but vouchsafe to me wings,

620

So to win to the city of rivers twain !<sup>1</sup>

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah then shouldst thou clearly discern—

How thy champions speed shouldst thou learn

HALF-CHORUS 2

Ah God, what fate, what doom doth await

The king of the mighty hand,

The hero of Cecrops' land ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Ant* 2)

We have cried to the Gods, and we cry once more

To the first best trust of the sore afraid

HALF-CHORUS 2

Zeus, hear us, whose offspring was born of yore

Of Inachus' daughter, the heifer-maid !

<sup>1</sup> Thebes round the old citadel flowed, on one side, the Ismenus, on the other, the Dirce

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

630 πόλει μοι ξύμμαχος  
γενοῦ τᾷδ' εὐμενής

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τὸ σὸν ἄγαλμα, τὸ σὸν ἵδρυμα  
πόλεος ἐκκομίζομαι  
πρὸς πυρὰν ὑβρισθέν

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

640 γυναῖκες, ἦκω πόλλ' ἔχων λέγειν φίλα,  
αὐτός τε σωθείς, ἤρέθην γὰρ ἐν μάχῃ,  
ἣν οἱ θανόντων ἐπτὰ δεσποτῶν λόχοι  
ἠγωνίσαντο ῥεῦμα Διρκαίου πάρα,  
νίκην τε Θησέως ἀγγελῶν. λόγου δέ σε  
μακροῦ ἀποπαύσω. Καπανέως γὰρ ἡ λάτρις,  
δν Ζεὺς κεραυνῷ πυρπόλῃ καταιθαλοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φίλτατ', εὖ μὲν νόστον ἀγγέλλεις σέθεν  
τήν τ' ἀμφὶ Θησέως βύξιν εἰ δὲ καὶ στρατὸς  
σῶς ἐστ' Ἀθηνῶν, πάντ' ἂν ἀγγέλλοις φίλα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

σῶς, καὶ πέπραγεν ὥς Ἀδραστος ὥφеле  
πρᾶξαι ξὺν Ἀργείοισιν, οὓς ἀπ' Ἰνάχου  
στείλας ἐπεστράτευσεν Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ τροπαῖα Ζηνὸς Αἰγέως τόκος  
ἔστησεν οἳ τε συµμετασχόντες δορός,  
λέξον· παρὼν γὰρ τοὺς παρόντας εὐφρανεῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

650 λαμπρὰ μὲν ἀκτὶς ἡλίου, κανὼν σαφής,  
ἔβαλλε γαῖαν· ἀμφὶ δ' Ἥλέκτρας πύλας  
ἔστην θεατῆς πύργον εὐαγῇ λαβών.  
ὀρῶ δὲ φύλα τρία τριῶν στρατευμάτων

## SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 1

Oh be our champion thou,  
To our city be gracious now ! 630

HALF-CHORUS 2

Thy belovèd are we, it was planted of thee,  
This city whose sons we would gain  
For the tomb from the outrage-stain

*Enter* MESSENGER

MESSENGER

Women, I come with tidings full of joy,—  
Myself escaped, for I was ta'en in fight,  
What time those seven bands of chieftains slain  
Hard by the fount of Dirce strove their strife,—  
Tidings of Theseus' triumph. I will spare thee  
Question —a vassal I of Capaneus  
Whom Zeus did blast with blazing levin-bolt 640

CHORUS

Dear friend, glad tidings this of thy return,  
Glad news of Theseus' but if Athens' host  
Is safe withal, thou heraldest all joy

MESSENGER

Safe and hath fared—I would Adrastus so  
Had fared with Argos' sons, whom forth he led  
From Inachus to that Cadmean burg

CHORUS

How then did Aegeus' son uprear to Zeus  
The trophy, he and those his spear-allies?  
Tell, thou wast there them that were not make glad

MESSENGER

Bright the sun's beam, true-levelled shaft of light, 650  
Smote on the earth Beside Electra's gate  
On a far-looking tower I stood to watch.  
And three tribes I beheld of war-bands three

τευχεςφόρον μὲν λαὸν ἐκτείνοντ' ἄνω  
 Ἴσμήνιον πρὸς ὄχθον, ὥς μὲν ἦν λόγος,  
 αὐτόν τ' ἄνακτα, παῖδα κλεινὸν Αἰγέως,  
 καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ, δεξιὸν τεταγμένους  
 κέρας, παλαιᾶς Κεκροπίας τ' οἰκήτορας,  
 662 ἴσους ἀριθμὸν ἁρμάτων δ' ὀχήματα  
 659 αὐτόν τε Πάραλον ἐστολισμένον δορί·  
 660 κρήνην παρ' αὐτὴν Ἄρεος· ἱππότην δ' ὄχλον  
 661 πρὸς κρασπέδοισι στρατοπέδου τεταγμένον  
 664 Κάδμου δὲ λαὸς ἦστο πρόσθε τειχέων,  
 665 νεκροὺς ὀπισθεν θέμενος, ὧν ἕκειτ' ἀγών.  
 663 ἔνερθε σεμνῶν μνημάτων Ἀμφίονος.<sup>1</sup>  
 ἱππεῦσι δ' ἱππῆς ἦσαν ἀνθρωπισμένοι  
 τετραόροισί τ' ἀντὶ ἄρμαθ' ἄρμασιν  
 κῆρυξ δὲ Θησέως εἶπεν εἰς πάντας τάδε·  
 σιγᾶτε, λαοί, σίγα, Καδμείων στίχες,  
 670 ἀκούσαθ'· ἡμεῖς ἥκομεν νεκροὺς μέτα  
 θάψαι θέλοντες, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον  
 σφύζοντες, οὐδὲν δεόμενοι τείναι φόνον  
 κοῦδὲν Κρέων τοῖσδ' ἀντεκῆρυξεν λόγοις,  
 ἀλλ' ἦστ' ἐφ' ὅπλοις σίγα ποιμένες δ' ὄχων  
 τετραόρων κατήρχον ἐντεῦθεν μάχης  
 πέραν δὲ διελάσαντες ἀλλήλων ὄχους,  
 παραιβάτας ἔστησαν εἰς τάξιν δορός.  
 χοῖ μὲν σιδήρῳ διεμάχονθ', οἱ δ' ἔστρεφον  
 πώλους ἐς ἀλκὴν αὐθις ἐς παραιβάτας  
 680 ἰδὼν δὲ Φόρβας, ὃς μοναμπύκων ἀναξ  
 ἦν τοῖς Ἐρεχθείδαισιν, ἁρμάτων ὄχλον,  
 οἳ τ' αὖ τὸ Κάδμου διεφύλασσον ἱππικόν,  
 συνῆψαν ἀλκὴν κακράτουν ἡσσῶντό τε  
 λεύσσων δὲ ταῦτα κοῦ κλύων, ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἦ

<sup>1</sup> Murray's re-arrangement adopted



## SUPPLIANTS

A mail-clad host far-stretching up the slopes  
 Unto the height Ismenian, as men said,  
 I saw the king's self, Aegeus' glorious son,  
 And his own war-band, marshalled on the right  
 With all the folk of Cecrops' ancient land,  
 Equal by tale And all the battle-cars  
 And Seaboard Men, arrayed with spears, were ranged  
 By Ares' fountain, and the clouds of horse 660  
 Were drawn out on the fringes of the host  
 Before their walls were marshalled Cadmus' folk—  
 Behind them lay those corpses, cause of strife—  
 On levels 'neath Amphion's hallowed tomb  
 So against horsemen panoplied horsemen stood,  
 And four-yoked chariots were by chariots faced  
 Then Theseus' herald cried in all men's ears  
 "Silence, ye people! Hush ye, ranks of Cadmus!  
 Hearken—we come but for the corpses' sake, 670  
 To bury them, and keep all Hellas' law  
 Inviolatè, nor would lengthen bloodshed out"  
 But Creon let his herald answer not,  
 But silent under shield abode Thereat  
 The four-horsed chariot-lords began the fray.  
 On, down the battle-lanes of foes they swept,  
 Set down their warriors, spear opposing spear,  
 And, while these strove with bickering steel, those  
     wheeled  
 Their steeds about, to aid their fighting-men  
 Then Phorbas, captain of the Erechtheid horse, 680  
 And they withal which led the Theban riders,  
 Marking the tumult of the battle-cars,  
 Down charging clashed, now triumphing, rolled back  
     now  
 This saw I, and not heard, for I was there,

- ἐνθ' ἄρματ' ἠγωνίζεθ' οἳ τ' ἐπεμβάται.  
 τὰκεῖ παρόντα πολλὰ πῆματ', οὐκ ἔχω  
 τί πρῶτον εἶπω, πότερα τὴν ἐς οὐρανὸν  
 κόνιν προσαντέλλουσαν, ὡς πολλὴ παρήν,  
 ἥ τοὺς ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω φορουμένους  
 690 ἱμάσιν, αἵματός τε φοινίου ῥοάς,  
 τῶν μὲν πιτνόντων, τῶν δέ, θραυσθέντων δίφρων,  
 εἰς κράτα πρὸς γῆν ἐκκυβιστώντων βία  
 πρὸς ἀρμάτων τ' ἀγαῖσι λειπόντων βίον.  
 νικῶντα δ' ἵπποις ὡς ὑπείδετο στρατὸν  
 Κρέων τὸν ἐνθένδ', ἰτέαν λαβὼν χερὶ  
 χωρεῖ, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν ξυμμάχοις δυσθυμίαν.  
 καὶ συμπατάξαντες μέσον πάντα στρατὸν  
 700 ἔκτεινον ἐκτείνοντο, καὶ παρηγγύων  
 κελευσμὸν ἀλλήλοισι σὺν πολλῇ βοῇ·  
 θεῖν', ἀντέρειδε τοῖς Ἑρεχθείδαις δόρυ.  
 697 καὶ μὴν τὰ Θησέως γ' οὐκ ὅκνη διεφθάρη,  
 698 ἀλλ' ἔετ' εὐθύς λάμπρ' ἀναρπάσας ὄπλα.<sup>1</sup>  
 703 λόχος δ' ὀδόντων ὄφεος ἐξηνδρωμένος  
 δεινὸς παλαιστής ἦν· ἔκλινε γὰρ κέρας  
 τὸ λαιὸν ἡμῶν δεξιού δ' ἡσώμενον  
 φεύγει τὸ κείνων· ἦν δ' ἀγὼν ἰσόρροπος  
 καὶ τῷδε τὸν στρατηγὸν αἰνέσαι παρήν  
 οὐ γὰρ τὸ νικῶν τοῦτ' ἐκέρδαιεν μόνον,  
 ἀλλ' ὥχετ' εἰς τὸ κάμνον οἰκείου στρατοῦ  
 710 ἔρρηξε δ' αὐδὴν, ὥσθ' ὑπηχῆσαι χθόνα·  
 ὦ παῖδες, εἰ μὴ σχήσετε στερρὸν δόρυ  
 σπαρτῶν τόδ' ἀνδρῶν, οἷχεται τὰ Παλλάδος.  
 θάρσος δ' ἐνῶρσε παντὶ Κραναίδων στρατῷ.  
 αὐτός θ' ὄπλισμα τοῦπιδάυριον λαβὼν  
 δεινῆς κορύνης διαφέρων ἐσφενδόνα,

<sup>1</sup> Murray's re-arrangement adopted

## SUPPLIANTS

There where the chariots and the warriors grappled  
Of thousand horrors there, which first to tell  
I know not—or of dust that surged and soared  
Upward unto the heavens, clouds on clouds,—  
Of men, by tangling reins snatched from the cars,  
Slung earthward,—of the murder-streams of gore,— 690  
Men falling here, and there, as crashed the chariots,  
With violence hurled head downwards to the earth,  
And battered out of life by chariot-shards

But Creon, marking how our horse prevailed  
On one wing, grasped his buckler in his hand,  
And vanward pressed, ere allies' hearts should faint  
All down the lines the fronts of battle clashed  
Men slew—were slain—a thunder of wild war-cries 700  
Rang, roared, of men on-cheering each his fellow—  
“Smite!”—“Drive the spear against Erechtheus’  
sons!”

Ha, but the heart of Theseus fainted not!  
On charged he, tossing high his flaming shield  
But the host wrought to man of dragon-teeth  
Was a grim wiestler back it bowed our wing  
Far on the left, but, by our right o'erborne,  
Fled theirs so equal-balanced was the fight

Then did our captain well and worshipfully,  
His triumph on the right sufficed him not,  
But he to his hard-pressed half-array sped fast,  
And sent a shattering shout,—earth rang again,— 710  
“My sons, except ye stay the stubborn spear  
Of the Dragon-seed, your Pallas' cause is lost!”  
So thrilled with courage all his Cranaid host  
Himself that Epidaurian weapon seized,  
The fearful mace, and slingwise swung it round,

- ὁμοῦ τραχήλους κάπικείμενον κᾶρα  
 κυνέας θερίζων κάποκαυλίζων ξύλω  
 μόλις δέ πως ἔτρεψεν εἰς φυγὴν πόδα  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀνηλάλαξα κᾶνωρχησάμην  
 720 κᾶκρουσα χεῖρας οἱ δ' ἔτεινον εἰς πύλας.  
 βοή δὲ καὶ κωκυτὸς ἦν ἀνὰ πτόλιν  
 νέων, γερόντων, ἱερά τ' ἐξεπίμπλασαν  
 φόβῳ παρὸν δὲ τειχέων εἶσω μολεῖν,  
 Θησεὺς ἐπέσχευ' οὐ γὰρ ὥς πέρσων πόλιν  
 μολεῖν ἔφασκεν, ἀλλ' ἀπαιτήσων νεκρούς.  
 τοιόνδε τοι στρατηγὸν αἰρεῖσθαι χρεών,  
 ὃς ἔν τε τοῖς δεινοῖσιν ἐστὶν ἄλκιμος  
 μισεῖ θ' ὑβριστὴν λαόν, ὃς πράσσων καλῶς  
 εἰς ἄκρα βῆναι κλιμάκων ἐνήλατα  
 730 ζητῶν ἀπώλεσ' ὄλβον ᾧ χρῆσθαι παρῆν

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν τήνδ' ἄελπτον ἡμέραν ἰδοῦσ' ἐγὼ  
 θεοὺς νομίζω, καὶ δοκῶ τῆς συμφορᾶς  
 ἔχιν ἔλασσον, τῶνδε τισάντων δίκην

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

- ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δῆτα τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς  
 φρονεῖν λέγουσι, σοῦ γὰρ ἐξηρτήμεθα  
 δρῶμέν τε τοιαῦθ' ἂν σὺ τυγχάνης θέλων  
 ἡμῖν γὰρ ἦν τό τ' Ἄργος οὐχ ὑποστατόν,  
 αὐτοί τε πολλοὶ καὶ νέοι βραχύοισιν  
 Ἐπεοκλέους δὲ σύμβασιν ποιουμένου,  
 740 μέτρια θέλοντος, οὐκ ἐχρήζομεν λαβεῖν,  
 κᾶπειτ' ἀπωλόμεσθ' ὃ δ' αὖ τότ' εὐτυχής,  
 λαβὼν πένης ὥς ἀρτίπλουτα χρήματα,  
 ὑβρίζ', ὑβρίζων τ' αὖθις ἀνταπώλετο  
 Κᾶδμου κακόφρων λαός. ὦ καιροῦ πέρα <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Murray's transposition of *κεν βρ.* and *κ περ* adopted.

## SUPPLIANTS

Down-mowing and clean-logging with his club  
Alike then necks and heads in helmets cased  
And scarce even then those stubborn feet would fly.  
And I, for joy I shouted, yea, I danced,  
And clapped mine hands    On strained they to the  
   gates

Then rang a cry and wailing through the town  
Of young and old the panic-stricken thronged  
The fanes But, though the way within lay clear,  
There Theseus stayed —“ Not to destroy the town  
Came I,” spake he, “ but to reclaim the dead ”  
Well might men choose such battle-chief as this,  
Who is in peril’s midst a tower of strength,  
But hates the scorers who, in fortune’s hour  
Seeking to mount the ladder’s topmost round,  
Let slip the bliss that lay within their hands

## CHORUS

Now I, beholding this unhopèd-for day,  
Know that Gods live, and feel my load of ill  
Lighter, since these have paid the penalty

## ADRASTUS

Zeus, wherefore do they say that wretched man  
Is wise ? For lo, we hang upon thy skirts,  
And that we do, it is but as thou wilt  
We deemed before our Argos none might stand,  
Ourselves, a countless host of lusty arms,  
And, when Eteocles proffered terms of peace,  
Fair was his offer, yet we would not hear,  
So were undone Now, prospering in their turn,  
Like beggar-wight with sudden-gotten wealth,  
Wanton they waxed, and perished in their pride  
Cadmus' mad-hearted sons O foolish men

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τὸ τόξον ἐντείνοντες, ὧ κενοὶ βροτῶν,  
καὶ πρὸς δίκης γε πολλὰ πάσχοντες κακά,  
φίλοις μὲν οὐ πείθεσθε, τοῖς δὲ πράγμασι·  
πόλεις τ', ἔχουσαι διὰ λόγου κάμψαι κακά,  
φόνῳ καθαιρεῖσθ', οὐ λόγῳ, τὰ πράγματα  
750 ἅτὰρ τί ταῦτα, κείνο βούλομαι μαθεῖν,  
πῶς ἐξεσώθης· εἴτα τ' ἄλλ' ἐρήσομαι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ ταραγμὸς πόλιν ἐκίνησεν δορί,  
πύλας διήλθον, ἥπερ εἰσῆει στρατός

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦν δ' εἵνεχ' ἀγῶν ἦν, νεκροὺς κομίζετε,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὅσοι γε κλεινοῖς ἔπτ' ἐφέστασαν λόχοις

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πῶς φής; ὁ δ' ἄλλος ποῦ κεκμηκότων ὄχλος,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τάφῳ δέδονται πρὸς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τοῦ κεῖθεν ἢ τοῦνθένδε; τίς δ' ἔθαψέ νιν,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θησεύς, σκιώδης ἔνθ' Ἐλευθερὶς πέτρα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

760 οὐς δ' οὐκ ἔθαψε ποῦ νεκροὺς ἤκεις λιπών;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐγγύς· πέλας γὰρ πᾶν ὃ τι σπονδάζεταιται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἦ που πικρῶς νιν θέραπες ἦγον ἐκ φόνου;

## SUPLIANTS

Who strain the bow beyond the mark, and suffer  
Much harm at justice' hand, and yield at last  
Not to friends' mediation, but stern facts !  
O foolish states, which might by parley end  
Feuds, yet decide them in the field of blood !  
Yet wherefore this ?—fain would I know of thee 750  
How thou didst 'scape, then will I ask the rest

MESSENGER

When tumult's battle-earthquake shook the town,  
Through that gate slipt I where the host poured in

ADRASTUS

And the dead bring ye, cause of all the strife ?

MESSENGER

Even all which captained those seven bands renowned

ADRASTUS

Ha !—and the rest which perished, where be they ?

MESSENGER

Laid in the tomb, hard by Cithaeron's folds

ADRASTUS

On that side, or on this ?<sup>1</sup>—who buried them ?

MESSENGER

Theseus, where hangs Eleutherae's shadowing rock

ADRASTUS

Where leftest thou those whom he buried not ? 760

MESSENGER

At hand . for earnest haste brings all things near

ADRASTUS

With loathing, surely, thralls took up the slain

<sup>1</sup> : e On the Theban or the Attic side of the range the  
tombs would be in the possession of the people in whose land  
they were Eleutherae was in Attica

## ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἐπέστη τῷδε δούλος ὢν πόνῳ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

\* \* \* \* \*

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

φαίης ἄν, εἰ παρήσθ' ὅτ' ἡγάπα νεκρούς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐνίψεν αὐτὸς τῶν ταλαιπώρων σφαγάς,

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

κᾶστροσέ γ' εὐνὰς κᾶκάλυψε σώματα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δεινὸν μὲν οὖν βάσταγμα κᾶσχύνην ἔχον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τί δ' αἰσχροὺς ἀνθρώποισι τᾶλλήλων κακά;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἴμοι· πόσῳ σφιν συνθανεῖν ἂν ἤθελον

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

770 ἄκραντ' ὀδύρει ταῖσδέ τ' ἐξάγεις δάκρυ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δοκῶ μὲν, αὐταί γ' εἰσὶν αἱ διδάσκαλοι  
ἀλλ' εἶεν· αἶρω χεῖρ' ἀπαντήσας νεκροῖς  
Ἄιδου τε μολπὰς ἐκχέω δακρυρρόους,  
φίλους προσαυδῶν, ὃν λελειμμένος τάλας  
ἔρημα κλαίω· τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον βροτοῖς  
οὐκ ἔστι τᾶνάλωμ' ἀναλωθὲν λαβεῖν,  
ψυχὴν βροτείαν· χρημάτων δ' εἰσὶν πόροι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ μὲν εὖ, τὰ δὲ δυστυχῇ·

στρ. α

πόλει μὲν εὐδοξία

780 καὶ στρατηλάταις δορὸς

διπλάζεται τιμά·



## SUPPLIANTS

MESSENGER

Never a slave set hand unto the toil.

ADRASTUS

[How?—did the *king* endure this, of his love?

MESSENGER

Hadst thou but seen his ministry of love !

ADRASTUS

*He* washed, himself, the poor youths' slaughter-stains !

MESSENGER

And spread the biers, and veiled the bodies o'er

ADRASTUS

An awful burden was it, fraught with shame !

MESSENGER

Nay, but what shame to men are brethren's ills ?

ADRASTUS

Ah me, far liefer had I died with them !

MESSENGER

Bootless thy mourning, stirring these to tears 770

ADRASTUS

I trow themselves this mourning-lore have taught

Enough I raise mine hand to greet the dead,

And pour out songs of death with streaming eyes,

Hailing our loved, bereft of whom—ah me !—

Forloin I weep for the one loss is this

That never mortal maketh good again,—

The life of man, though wealth may be re-won.

CHORUS

(*Str* 1)

There is joy, there is sorrow this day, for our town

Hath a garland of glory,

And the chiefs of the spear-host, lo, twofold renown 780

Maketh splendid their story

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ἔμοι δὲ παίδων μὲν εἰσιδεῖν μέλη  
πικρὸν, καλὸν θέαμα δ', εἵπερ ὄψομαι  
τὰν ἄελπτον ἀμέραν,  
ἰδοῦσα πάντων μέγιστον ἄλγος

ἄγαμόν μ' ἔτι δεῦρ' ἀεὶ ἀντ. α'

χρόνος παλαιὸς πατὴρ

ᾧ φελ' ἀμερᾶν κτίσαι.

τί γάρ μ' ἔδει παίδων;

790

τί μὲν γὰρ ἥλπιζον αἱ πεπονθέναι

πάθος περισσόν, εἰ γάμων ἀπεξύγην,

νῦν δ' ὁρῶ σαφέστατον

κακόν, τέκνων φιλτάτων στρεῖσθαι.

ἀλλὰ τάδ' ἤδη σώματα λεύσσω

τῶν οἰχομένων παίδων μελέα

πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμην σὺν τοῖσδε τέκνοις

κοινὸν ἐς "Αἶδην καταβᾶσα,

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

στεναγμόν, ὦ ματέρες,

στρ. β'

τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς νεκρῶν

800

αὔσατ' ἀπύσατ' ἀντίφων' ἐμῶν

στεναγμάτων κλύουσαι

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ παῖδες, ὦ πικρὸν φίλων

προσηγόρημα ματέρων,

προσαυδῶ σε τὸν θανόντα.

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ ἰώ,

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῶν γ' ἐμῶν κακῶν ἐγώ.

## SUPPLIANTS

But to see my sons' limbs !—sight bitter for me,  
 Yet proud, for the day that I hoped not to see  
     Hath uprisen before me,  
 Who have seen earth's ghastliest misery

(Ant 1)

Ah that Time the father, the ancient of days,  
     Had but caused me unmarried  
 To abide ! Was I wholly in evil case  
     While childless I tarried ?

Yea, what dark bodings of anguish bode  
 My peace, when I thought to refuse love's yoke ?  
     But of dear sons harried  
 Now see I mine home, no visioned stroke

790

Ah, yonder I see the forms draw nigh  
     Of our perished children, alas !  
 O but with these my beloved to die,  
     Unto union in Hades to pass !

*Enter THESEUS, with Athenian soldiers marching in  
 procession with corpses on biers*

ADRASTUS

Mothers, ring out the moan  
 For dear dead 'neath the ground,  
 Echo my crying with accordant groan  
     Of mournful-wailing sound

(Str 2)

800

CHORUS

O dead son !—bitter word  
 For mothers' lips to know !  
 I cry on thee, in ears that have not heard  
     Ah for my woe !

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

\* \* \* \* \*

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐπάθομεν ὦ —

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ κύντατ' ἄλγη κακῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ πόλις Ἀργεῖα, τὸν ἐμὸν πότμον οὐκ ἐσορᾶτε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρώσιν ἐμὲ τήν

810

τάλαιναν, τέκνων ἄπαιδα

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

προσάγετε τῶν δυσπότμων

ἀντ. β'

σώμαθ' αἵματοσταγῇ,

σφαγέντας οὐκ ἄξι' οὐδ' ὑπ' ἀξίων,

ἐν οἷς ἀγὼν ἐκράνθη

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δόθ', ὥς περιπτυχαῖσι δὴ

χέρας προσαρμόσας' ἐμοῖς

ἐν ἀγκῶσι τέκνα θῶμαι

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἔχεις ἔχεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πημάτων γ' ἄλις βάρος.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τεκούσι δ' οὐ λέγεις ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰετέ μου.

## SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

We suffered—

CHORUS

Deepest anguish !

ADRASTUS

Ah, fair town

Of Argos, see my fate !

CHORUS

O yea, upon our sorrows she looks down,

The childless desolate !

810

ADRASTUS

Bring them, the blood-besprent (*Ant* 2)

Forms of the evil-starred,

When to unrighteous foes the victory went,

Slain, an unmeet reward !

CHORUS

Give them, that I may cast

Mine arms round these, and lull,

In death's sleep clasped, my children.

ADRASTUS

This thou hast

CHORUS

Grief's cup is full !

ADRASTUS

Woe !

CHORUS

For these mother's wail !

ADRASTUS

Hear me !

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

820

στένεις ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν ἄχῃ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

εἶθε με Καδμείων ἕναρον στίχες ἐν κονίαισιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμὸν δὲ μήποτ' ἐξύγη  
δέμας γ' ἐς ἀνδρὸς εὐνάν

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἴδετε κακῶν πέλαγος, ὦ  
ματέρες τάλαιναι τέκνων

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κατὰ μὲν ὄνυξιν ἡλοκίσμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ  
σποδὸν κára κεχύμεθα

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

830

ἰὼ ἰώ μοί μοι  
κατά με πέδον γᾶς ἔλοι,  
διὰ δὲ θύελλα σπάσαι,  
πυρός τε φλογμὸς ὁ Διὸς ἐν κára πέσοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πικροὺς ἐσεῖδες γάμους,  
πικρὰν δὲ Φοίβου φάτιν  
ἔρημά σ' ἂ πολύστονος Οἰδιπόδα  
δῶματα λιποῦσ' ἦλθ' Ἑρινύς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

840

μέλλων σ' ἐρωτᾶν, ἥνίκ' ἐξήντλεις στρατῷ  
γούους, ἀφήσω · τοὺς ἐκεῖ μὲν ἐκλιπὼν  
εἴασα μύθους, νῦν δ' Ἄδραστον ἱστορῶ  
πόθεν ποθ' οἶδε διαπρεπεῖς εὐψυχία  
θνητῶν ἔφυσαν ; εἶπέ γ', ὥς σοφώτερος,  
νεοισιν ἀστῶν τῶνδ' ἐπιστήμων γὰρ εἰ.

## SUPPLIANTS

CHORUS

Thy moan  
For us, for thee, is sped 820

ADRASTUS

Oh had the foe slain me !

CHORUS

Oh to have known  
Never a husband's bed !

ADRASTUS

Ah mother !—ah, dead child !  
Lo, what a trouble-sea !

CHORUS

Our cheeks are furrow-scarred, and our white heads  
are marred

With ashes all defiled

ADRASTUS

Woe's me, ah woe is me !  
Yawn for my grave, earth's floor !  
Storm-blast, in pieces break ! 830

O that on mine head dashed the flame of Zeus down  
flashed !

CHORUS

Ruin those bridals bore

Thy ruin Phoebus spake

The curse of Oedipus, with sighing fraught,  
Childless hath left his house, and thee hath sought.

THETSEUS (*to leader of CHORUS*)

Thee had I asked, but, for thy mourning poured  
Forth to the host, refrain, and my request  
To thee forgo, and ask Adrastus now — 840  
Of what race sprang these chiefs, above all men  
Which shone in valour ? To my young Athenians  
Tell, of thy fuller wisdom, for thou know'st.

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

εἶδες <sup>1</sup> γὰρ αὐτῶν κρείσσον' ἢ λέξαι λόγῳ  
 τολμήμαθ', οἷς ἤλπιζον αἰρήσειν πόλιν.  
 ἐν δ' οὐκ ἐρήσομαί σε, μὴ γέλωτ' ὄφλω,  
 ὅτῳ ξυνέστη τῶνδ' ἕκαστος ἐν μάχῃ  
 ἢ τραῦμα λόγχης πολεμίων ἐδέξατο.  
 κοινοὶ <sup>2</sup> γὰρ οὗτοι τῶν τ' ἀκουόντων λόγοι  
 850 καὶ τοῦ λέγοντος · πῶς τις ἐν μάχῃ βεβῶς  
 λόγχης ἰούσης πρόσθεν ὁμμάτων πυκνῆς  
 σαφῶς ἀπήγγειλ' ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός ,  
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην οὔτ' ἐρωτῆσαι τάδε  
 οὔτ' ἂν πιθέσθαι τοῖσι τολμῶσιν λέγειν  
 μόλις γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτὰ τὰναγκαῖ' ὀρᾷ  
 δύναιτ' ἂν ἐστὼς πολεμίοις ἐναντίος.

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν · καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἄκοντί μοι  
 δίδως ἔπαινον τῶνδ', ἐγὼ τε βούλομαι  
 φίλων ἀληθῆ καὶ δίκαι' εἰπεῖν πέρι  
 860 ὀρᾶς τὸ Δῖον οὐ βέλος διέπτατο ,  
 Καπανεὺς ὃδ' ἐστίν ᾧ βίος μὲν ἦν πολὺς,  
 ἥκιστα δ' ὄλβῳ γαῦρος ἦν φρόνημα δὲ  
 οὐδέν τι μείζον εἶχεν ἢ πένης ἀνὴρ,  
 φεύγων τραπέζαις ὅστις ἐξογκοῖτ' ἄγαν  
 τάρκοῦντ' ἀτίζων οὐ γὰρ ἐν γαστρὸς βορᾷ  
 τὸ χρηστὸν εἶναι, μέτρια δ' ἐξαρκεῖν ἔφη.  
 φίλος τ' ἀληθὴς ἦν φίλοις παροῦσί τε  
 καὶ μὴ παροῦσιν ὧν ἀριθμὸς οὐ πολὺς  
 870 ἀψευδὲς ἦθος, εὐπροσήγορον στόμα,  
 ἄκραντον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἐς οἰκέτας ἔχων  
 οὔτ' εἰς πολίτας. τὸν δὲ δεῦτερον λέγω

<sup>1</sup> Paley; for MSS εἶδον

<sup>2</sup> So MSS Grotius, κενοὶ "For this, for those that tell  
 and those that hear, Were an idle tale"



## SUPPLIANTS

Their gallant deeds, too great for words to speak,  
Thou saw'st, whereby they hoped to win yon Thebes

One question, meet for laughter, I ask not—  
Whom each of these encountered in the strife,  
Or from what foeman's spear received his wound  
For they that hear such tales as much could say  
As he which tells    Who, that hath stood in fight,    850  
When spear on spear is flying before men's eyes,  
Can certainly report who bravely bears him ?  
I could not ask such vanity as this,  
Nor them believe whose impudence would tell  
Scarce can a man see what needs must be seen,  
What time he standeth foot to foot with foes.

### ADRASTUS

Hear then    To no unwilling lips thou givest  
The praise of these · full fain am I to speak  
Both truth and justice touching men I loved.

Seest thou yon corpse wherethrough leapt Zeus's  
bolt ?    860

Capaneus he, a mighty man of wealth,  
Yet naught thereby exalted, but he bare  
A spirit no whit loftier than the poor,  
Shunning the man whose pomp of banquets scorned  
That which sufficeth    “ Not in gluttony,”  
Said he, “ is good . enough is as a feast ”  
True friend to friends was he, alike when near  
And far    of such is there no multitude  
A guleless heart, a mouth of gracious speech,  
Who left no dues unrendered, or to servants    870  
Or citizens    Now of the next I speak,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

Ἐτέοκλον, ἄλλην χρηστότητ' ἤσκηκότα  
 νεανίας ἦν τῷ βίῳ μὲν ἐνδεής,  
 πλείστας δὲ τιμὰς ἔσχ' ἐν Ἀργεῖα χθονί.  
 φίλων δὲ χρυσὸν πολλάκις δωρουμένων  
 οὐκ εἰσεδέξατ' οἶκον ὥστε τοὺς τρόπους  
 δούλους παρασχεῖν χρημάτων ζευχθεὶς ὑπο.  
 τοὺς δ' ἑξαμαρτάνοντας, οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν  
 ἤχθαιρ'· ἐπεὶ τοι κοῦδὲν αἰτία πόλις  
 880 κακῶς κλύουσα διὰ κυβερνήτην κακόν  
 ὁ δ' αὖ τρίτος τῶνδ' Ἴππομέδων τοιόσδ' ἔφθ  
 παῖς ὦν ἐτόλμησ' εὐθύς οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὰς  
 Μουσῶν τραπέσθαι πρὸς τὸ μαλθακὸν βίου,  
 ἀγροὺς δὲ ναίων, σκληρὰ τῇ φύσει διδοὺς  
 ἔχαιρε πρὸς τ' ἀνδρείου, εἰς τ' ἄγρας ἰὼν  
 ἵπποις τε χαίρων τόξα τ' ἐντείνων χεροῖν,  
 πόλει παρασχεῖν σῶμα χρήσιμον θέλων.  
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ δ' ἄλλος Ἀταλάντης γόνος,  
 890 παῖς Παρθενοπαῖος, εἶδος ἑξοχώτατος,  
 Ἀρκὰς μὲν ἦν, ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοὰς  
 παιδεύεται κατ' Ἄργος. ἐκτραφεὶς δ' ἐκεῖ  
 πρῶτον μὲν, ὥς χρὴ τοὺς μετοικούντας ξένους,  
 λυπηρὸς οὐκ ἦν οὐδ' ἐπίφθονος πόλει  
 οὐδ' ἐξεριστῆς τῶν λόγων, ὅθεν βαρὺς  
 μάλιστ' ἂν εἴη δημότης τε καὶ ξένος·  
 λόχοις δ' ἐφεστὼς ὥσπερ Ἀργεῖος γεγὼς  
 ἦμυνε χώρα, χῶπότ' εὖ πράσσοι πόλις,  
 ἔχαιρε, λυπρῶς δ' ἔφερεν, εἴ τι δυστυχοῖ.  
 πολλοὺς δ' ἐραστὰς καπὸ θηλειῶν ὅσας  
 900 ἔχων, ἐφρούρει μηδὲν ἑξαμαρτάνειν  
 Τυδέως δ' ἔπαινον ἐν βραχεῖ θήσω μέγαν·  
 οὐκ ἐν λόγοις ἦν λαμπρὸς, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀσπίδι  
 δεινὸς σοφιστῆς πολλὰ τ' ἐξευρεῖν σοφός.

## SUPPLIANTS

Eteoclus, graced, he too, with excellence  
A young man he, not rich in this world's goods,  
But in the Argive land dowered rich with honour,  
Who oft, when friends would lavish on him gold,  
Received it not his doors within, to make  
His life a slave bowed 'neath the yoke of wealth  
He loathed wrong-doeis, not his ering country,  
Seeing the guilt is nowise in the State  
That through an evil pilot wins ill fame 880  
Such too Hippomedon was, the third with these  
From childhood up he deigned not turn aside  
Unto the Muses' joys, for ease of life,  
But in the field abode, enduring hardness  
Gladly for valour's sake, and, hunting still,  
Joyed in the steed and hands that strain the bow,  
Eager to yield his land his body's best

The fourth was huntress Atalanta's son,  
Parthenopaeus, unmatched in goodlihead  
Arcadian he, but came to Inachus, 890  
And lived his youth at Aigos Fostered there,  
First, as beseems the sojourner in the land,  
He vexed not, nor was jealous of the state,  
Nor was a wrangler, whereby citizens  
Or aliens most shall jar with fellow-men,  
But in the ranks stood like an Argive born,  
Fought for the land, and, whenso prospered Argos,  
Rejoiced, and grieved when it went ill with her,—  
Of many a man, of many a woman loved,  
Yet from transgression did he keep him pure 900

Tydeus' high praise next will I sum in brief.  
In speech he shone not, a dread reasoner he  
In logic of the shield, and war's inventions.

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

γνώμη δ' ἀδελφοῦ Μελεάγρου λελειμμένος,  
 ἴσον παρέσχευ ὄνομα, διὰ τέχνης δορός  
 εὐρὼν ἀκριβῇ μουσικὴν ἐν ἀσπίδι·  
 φιλότιμον ἦθος, πλούσιον φρόνημα δὲ  
 ἐν τοῖσιν ἔργοις, οὐχὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἴσον  
 910 ἐκ τῶνδε μὴ θαύμαζε τῶν εἰρημένων,  
 Θησεῦ, πρὸ πύργων τούσδε τολμῆσαι θανεῖν.  
 τὸ γὰρ τραφῆναι μὴ κακῶς αἰδῶ φέρει·  
 αἰσχύνεται δὲ τὰγάθ' ἀσκήσας ἀνὴρ  
 κακὸς κεκλήσθαι πᾶς τις ἢ δ' εὐανδρία  
 διδακτός, εἵπερ καὶ βρέφος διδάσκεται  
 λέγειν ἀκούειν θ' ὧν μάθησιν οὐκ ἔχει.  
 ἂ δ' ἂν μάθη τις, ταῦτα σφύζεσθαι φιλεῖ  
 πρὸς γῆρας οὕτω παῖδας εὖ παιδεύετε.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

920 ἰὼ τέκνον, δυστυχῇ σ'  
 ἔτρεφον, ἔφερον ὑφ' ἥπατος  
 πόνους ἐνεγκούσ' ἐν ὠδίσι· καὶ νῦν  
 "Αἶδας τὸν ἐμὸν ἔχει  
 μόχθον ἀθλίας, ἐγὼ δὲ  
 γηροβοσκὸν οὐκ ἔχω  
 τεκοῦσ' ἅ τάλαινα παῖδα.

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

930 καὶ μὴν τὸν Οἰκλέους γε γενναῖον τόκον  
 θεοὶ ζῶντ' ἀναρπάσαντες εἰς μυχοὺς χθονὸς  
 αὐτοῖς τεθρίπποις εὐλογοῦσιν ἐμφανῶς·  
 τὸν Οἰδίπου δὲ παῖδα, Πολυνείκην λέγω,  
 ἡμεῖς ἐπαινέσαντες οὐ ψευδοίμεθ' ἄν.  
 ξένος γὰρ ἦν μοι πρὶν λιπὼν Κάδμου πόλιν

## SUPPLIANTS

In counsel not as his brother Meleager,  
Yet of like fame, through science of the spear  
Getting him ripest scholarship of war  
A soaring soul was his, a spirit rich  
Where deeds might serve, in speech of less avail

Hearing my words, O Theseus, marvel not  
That these before yon towers feared not to die 910  
The fruit that noble nurture bears is honour,  
And whosoe'er hath practised knightly deeds  
Would blush to be called craven. Ye may teach  
This chivalry, for even the babe is taught  
To speak and hear things not yet understood,  
And what one learneth, that he is wont to keep  
To hoary hairs. Then train ye well the child

### CHORUS

O son, for thy sorrow I gave thee  
Life of my life 'neath my zone,  
And I bore for thee travail-pain 920  
And now is my loss death's gain;  
Of my labours no fruit doth remain,  
Nor to foster mine eld may I have thee  
Woe's me that I bare a son!

### THESEUS

To Oekleus' noble son the very Gods,  
Who whelmed him with his car down earth's abyss  
Living, gave manifest token of their praise<sup>1</sup>  
But Oedipus' son—I tell of Polyneices—  
Myself shall praise, nor falsely speak herein 930  
My guest was he, ere, leaving Cadmus' town

<sup>1</sup> As being rescued from pursuers, and entombed by the Gods.

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

φυγῇ πρὸς Ἄργος διαβαλεῖν αὐθαίρετος  
ἀλλ' οἶσθ' ὃ δρᾶσαι βούλομαι τούτων πέρι,

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν, σοῖσι πείθεσθαι λόγοις

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸν μὲν Διὸς πληγέντα Καπανέα πυρί—

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἢ χωρὶς ἱερὸν ὥς νεκρὸν θάψαι θέλεις;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ναί τοὺς δέ γ' ἄλλους πάντας ἐν μιᾷ πυρᾷ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα θήσεις μνήμα τῷδε χωρίσας;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αὐτοῦ παρ' οἴκουσ τοῦσδε συμπήξας τάφον.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὗτος μὲν ἤδη δμῶσιν ἂν μέλοι πόνος

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

940 ἡμῖν δέ γ' οἶδε στειχέτω δ' ἄχθη νεκρῶν

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἔτ', ὦ τάλαιναι μητέρες, τέκνων πέλας

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἥκιστ', Ἄδραστε, τοῦτο πρόσφορον λέγεις

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πῶς, τὰς τεκούσας οὐ χρεὼν ψαῦσαι τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὄλουντ' ἰδοῦσαι τοῦσδ' ἂν ἡλλοιωμένους.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πικρὰ γὰρ ὄψις αἷμα κῶτειλαὶ νεκρῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δῆτα λύπην ταῖσδε προσθεῖναι θέλεις,

## SUPPLIANTS

Self-banished, unto Argos he crossed o'er.  
But knowest thou my wish as touching these ?

ADRASTUS

Naught know I, save one thing—to heed thy words

THESEUS

Capaneus, stricken by the fire of Zeus—

ADRASTUS

Wouldst bury him apart, a hallowed corpse ?

THESEUS

Yea, but the rest all on one funeral-pyre

ADRASTUS

Where wilt thou set for him that several tomb ?

THESEUS

Here, by these halls I have built his sepulchre

ADRASTUS

Our servants' tendance shall he straightway have

THESEUS

These, mine    Now let the biers of death move on    940

ADRASTUS

Come, hapless mothers, to your sons draws nigh

THESEUS

Adrastus, this thou say'st were all unmeet

ADRASTUS

How should the mothers choose but touch their sons ?

THESEUS

'Twere death to look on them so sorely married

ADRASTUS

Bitter to see are slain men's blood and wounds

THESEUS

Why then wouldst add fresh anguish to their grief ?

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

## ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

950 νικᾶς μένειν χρή τλημόνως λέγει γὰρ εὖ  
Θησεύς ὅταν δὲ τοῦσδε προσθῶμεν πυρί,  
ὅστᾱ προσάξουσθ' ὧ ταλαίπωροι βροτῶν,  
τί κτᾶσθε λόγχας καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνους  
τίθεσθε; παύσασθ', ἀλλὰ λήξαντες πόνων  
ἄστη φυλάσσεθ' ἥσυχοι μεθ' ἥσυχων.  
σμικρὸν τὸ χρήμα τοῦ βίου· τοῦτον δὲ χρή  
ὥς ῥᾶστα καὶ μὴ σὺν πόνοις διεκπερᾶν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εὐτεκνος, οὐκέτ' εὐπαις, στρ.  
οὐδ' εὐτυχίας μετεστίν μοι  
κουροτόκοις ἐν Ἀργείαις  
οὐδ' Ἀρτεμις λοχία  
960 προσφθέγγεται ἂν τὰς ἀτέκνους.  
δυσαίων δ' ὁ βίος,  
πλαγκτὰ δ' ὥσεί τις νεφέλα,  
πνευμάτων ὑπὸ δυσχίμων αἴισσω

ἐπτὰ ματέρες ἐπτὰ κούρους ἀντ.  
ἐγεινάμεθ' αἱ ταλαίπωροι  
κλεινοτάτους ἐν Ἀργείοις  
καὶ νῦν ἄπαις ἄτεκνος  
γηράσκω δυστηνοτάτως,  
οὔτ' ἐν φθιμένοις  
οὔτ' ἐν ζῶσιν κρινομένα,  
970 χωρὶς δὴ τινα τῶνδ' ἔχουσα μοῖραν.

ὑπολελειμμένα μοι δάκρυα· ἐπῳδ.  
μέλεα παιδὸς ἐν οἴκοις  
κεῖται μνήματα, πένθιμοι  
κουραὶ καὶ στέφανοι κόμας,



## SUPPLIANTS

## ADRASTUS

Well said    Ye, tairry patiently, for well  
Speaks Theseus    When to fire we have given these,  
Yourselves the bones shall gather    Hapless mortals !  
Why do ye get you spears and deal out death    950  
To fellow-men ?    Stay, from such toils forbear,  
And peaceful mid the peaceful ward your towns  
Short is life's span    behoves to pass through this  
Softly as may be, not with travail worn.

*The funeral procession passes on to the pyres, which are kindled in sight of the stage*

## CHORUS

Crowned with fair sons above others      (*Str* )  
 No more am I seen,  
 Neither blessed mid Argive mothers ,  
 Nor the Travail-queen  
 To the childless shall give fair greeting '   
 Forlorn is my life, as a fleeting  
 Lone cloud that flees from the beating  
 Of storm-scourges keen

Seven mothers—and heroes seven           (*Ant*)  
To our sorrow we bare  
None princelier to Argos were given  
Now in childless despair  
Drear old age creepeth upon me,  
Yet the ranks of the dead have not known me,  
Nor the count of the living may own me,  
But an outcast I fare

970

For me are but tears remaining ·      (*Epode*)  
Saddest memorials rest  
In mine halls of my son—shorn hair  
And garlands of mourning are there ;

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

λοιβαί τε νεκύων φθιμένων,  
 αοιδαί θ' ἄς χρυσοκόμας  
 Ἀπόλλων οὐκ ἐνδέχεται  
 γόοισιν δ' ὀρθρευομένα  
 δάκρυσι νοτερὸν αἰὲ πέπλων  
 πρὸς στέρνῳ πτύχα τέγξω.

980 καὶ μὴν θαλάμας τάσδ' ἐσορῶ δὴ  
 Καπανέως ἤδη τύμβον θ' ἱερὸν  
 μελάθρων τ' ἐκτὸς  
 Θησέως ἀναθήματα νεκροῖς,  
 κλεινὴν τ' ἄλοχον τοῦ καταφθιμένου  
 τοῦδε κεραυνῷ πέλας Εὐάδην,  
 ἣν Ἰφίς ἀναξ παῖδα φυτεύει  
 τί ποτ' αἰθερίαν ἔστηκε πέτραν,  
 ἣ τῶνδε δόμων ὑπερακρίζει,  
 τήνδ' ἐμβαίνουσα κέλευθον,

## ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

990	τί φέγγος, τί ν' αἶγλαν ἐδίφρευε τόθ' ἄλιος σελάνα τε κατ' αἰθέρα, λαμπάσιν ὠκυθόαις λυγρᾶς <sup>1</sup> ἱππεύουσα δι' ὄρφνας, * * ἀνίκα γάμων τῶν ἐμῶν πόλις Ἀργους αοιδὰς εὐδαιμονίας ἐπύργωσε καὶ γαμέτα χαλκεοτευχοὺς τε Καπανέως; 1000 δρομὰς ἐξ ἐμῶν πρὸς σ' ἔβαν οἴκων ἐκβακχευσαμένα,	στρ.
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<sup>1</sup> Text corrupt Paley's reading and interpretation

## SUPPLIANTS

Libations—for dead lips' draining,  
 Songs—which the golden-tressed  
     Apollo shall turn from in scorn,  
 And with wails shall I greet each morn,  
 Ever drenching with tears fast raining  
     The vesture-folds on my breast

Lo, yonder the fiery bower, 980  
     Even Capaneus' sacred pyre  
     I see it without the fane,  
     With Theseus' gifts to the slain  
 Ha! the wife draweth nigh in this hour  
     To the slain of the levin-fire,  
     Evadne the princess renowned!  
     On yon cliff why is she found  
 Whose crags above this fane tower?  
     And she climbs, and she climbs ever higher!

*EVADNE appears on the cliff above the pyre of Capaneus,  
     dressed in festal attire*

EVADNE

What light ill-omened shone (Str) 990  
 When flashed thy wheels, O Sun,  
 And when the moon raced on,  
     And star-lamps glancing  
 Raced through a lowering sky,  
 When Argos tossed on high  
 The gladsome bridal-cy,  
     And throbb'd with dancing,  
 And thrill'd with song, to see  
 Mine hero wed with me?  
 O love, I rush to thee 1000  
     From mine home, raving,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

πυρὸς φῶς τάφον τε  
 ματεύουσα τὸν αὐτόν,  
 ἐς ᾿Αἶδαν καταλύσουσ' ἔμμοχθον  
 βίοτον αἰῶνός τε πόνους  
 ἥδιστος γάρ τοι θάνατος  
 συνθνήσκειν θνήσκουσι φίλοις,  
 εἰ δαίμων τάδε κραίνοι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

1010

καὶ μὴν ὀρᾷς τήνδ' ἧς ἐφέστηκας πέλας  
 πυράν, Διὸς θησαυρόν, ἔνθ' ἔνεστι σὸς  
 πόσις δαμασθεὶς λαμπάσιν κεραυνίοις.

## ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1020

ὀρῶ δὴ τελευτάν,  
 ἔν' ἔστακα· τύχα δέ μοι  
 ξυνάπτει ποδός· ἀλλὰ τῆς  
 εὐκλείας χάριν ἔνθεν ὀρ-  
 μάσω τᾶσδ' ἀπὸ πέτρας  
 πηδήσασα πυρὸς ἔσω,  
 σῶμά τ' αἶθοπι φλογμῷ  
 πόσει συμμίξασα φίλον,  
 χρώτα χρωτὶ πέλας θεμένα  
 Περσεφονείας ἥξω θαλάμους,  
 σὲ τὸν θανόντ' οὐποτ' ἐμᾶ  
 προδοῦσα ψυχᾷ κατὰ γᾶς  
 ἔτω φῶς γάμοι τε  
 †εἶθ' ἀμείνονες εὖναι  
 δικαίων ὕμεναίων ἐν ᾿Αργεῖ  
 φανείεν τέκνοισιν ἐμοῖς,  
 εἴη δ' εὐναῖος γαμέτας†<sup>1</sup>

αὐτ

<sup>1</sup> Text uncertain Paley's reading and interpretation.

## SUPPLIANTS

Seeking thy tomb, thy pyre,  
Longing with strong desire  
To end in that same fire  
    Mute anguish, braving  
Hades—to end life's woe ;  
For death is sweetest so  
With dear dead to lie low.—  
    God grant my craving !

### CHORUS

Lo, the pyre nigh,—above it dost thou stand,—  
Zeus' own possession, on the which is laid                   1010  
Thy lord, o'erthrown by flash of levin-bolt.

### EVADNE

The end !—I see it now,   (*Ant*)  
Here standing   Friend art thou,  
Fortune !   From this cliff's brow,  
    For wifehood's glory,  
With spurning feet I dart  
Down into yon fire's heart  
To meet him, ne'er to part,—  
    Flames reddening o'er me,—                                   1020  
To nestle to his side,  
In Cora's<sup>1</sup> bowers a bride !  
O love, though thou hast died,  
    I'll not forsake thee  
Farewell life, bridal bed !  
By happier omens led,  
Ah, be our children wed !  
    May leal love make ye,  
Bridegrooms to be, life through  
Unto my daughters true .

<sup>1</sup> Persephone, queen of Hades

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

1030

συντηχθεὶς αὖραις ἀδόλοισ  
γενναίας ψυχᾶς ἀλόχῳ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὃδ' αὐτὸς σὸς πατὴρ βαίνει πέλας,  
γεραιὸς Ἴφιος εἰς νεωτέρους λόγους,  
οὓς οὐ κατειδὼς πρόσθεν ἀλγήσει κλύων.

ΙΦΙΣ

1040

ὦ δυστάλαιναι, δυστάλας δ' ἐγὼ γέρων,  
ἤκω διπλοῦν πένθημ' ὁμαιμόνων ἔχων,  
τὸν μὲν θανόντα παῖδα Καδμείων δορὶ  
Ἐτέοκλον εἰς γῆν πατρίδα ναυσθλώσων νεκρόν,  
ζητῶν δ' ἐμὴν παῖδ', ἣ δόμων ἐξώπιος  
βέβηκε πηδήσασα Καπανέως δάμαρ,  
θανεῖν ἐρώσα σὺν πόσει. χρόνον μὲν οὖν  
τὸν πρόσθ' ἐφρουρεῖτ' ἐν δόμοις· ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγὼ  
φυλακὰς ἀνῆκα τοῖς παρεστῶσιν κακοῖς,  
βέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ τῇδέ νιν δοξάζομεν  
μάλιστ' ἂν εἶναι φράζετ' εἰ κατείδετε.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τί τάσδ' ἐρωτᾶς, ἥδ' ἐγὼ πέτρας ἔπι  
ὄρνις τις ὥσει Καπανέως ὑπὲρ πυρᾶς  
δύστηνον αἰώρημα κουφίζω, πάτερ

ΙΦΙΣ

τέκνον, τίς αὖρα; τίς στόλος, τίνος χάριν  
δόμων ὑπερβᾶς ἦλθες εἰς τήνδε χθόνα;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1050

ὀργὴν λάβοις ἂν τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων  
κλύων· ἀκοῦσαι δ' οὐ σε βούλομαι, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

τί δ'; οὐ δίκαιον πατέρα τὸν σὸν εἰδέναι;

## SUPPLIANTS

One love-breath breathe in you  
Now, Death, come—take me ! 1030

### CHORUS

Lo, here himself, thy sire, is drawing nigh,  
Old Iphis, within sound of thy strange speech,  
Which, heard not yet, shall wring his heart to hear

*Enter* IPHIS

### IPHIS

O hapless ye !—O hapless ancient I !  
Burdened with twofold grief for kin I came,  
To bear unto his fatherland oversea  
My son Eteoclus, slain by Theban spear,  
And seeking for my daughter, who hath fled  
Forth of mine halls, the wife of Capaneus,  
Longing with him to die Through days o'erpast 1040  
Guauded she was at home but soon as I  
Slackened the watch, for ills that pressed on me,  
Forth did she pass Howbeit here, methinks,  
Is she most like to be. Say, have ye seen her ?

### EVADNE

Wherefore ask these ? Here am I on the rock  
Even as a bird, my father, hang I poised  
In misery o'er the pyre of Capaneus

### IPHIS

My child, what wind hath blown, what journeying  
led thee ?  
Why flee thine home and come unto this land ?

### EVADNE

Thou wouldst be wroth to hear my purposes 1050  
O father, I would not that thou shouldst hear

### IPHIS

How ?—were't not just thy very father knew ?

## ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

κριτης ἂν εἴης οὐ σοφὸς γνώμης ἐμῆς.

ΙΦΙΣ

σκευῇ δὲ τῇδε τοῦ χάριν κοσμεῖς δέμας ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

θέλει τι κλεινὸν οὗτος ὁ στολμός, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

ὥς οὐκ ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ πένθιμος πρέπεις ὀρᾶν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

εἰς γάρ τι πρᾶγμα νεοχμὸν ἐσκευάσμεθα.

ΙΦΙΣ

καῖπειτα τύμβῳ καὶ πυρᾷ φαίνει πέλας ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ καλλίνικος ἔρχομαι

ΙΦΙΣ

1060 νικῶσα νίκην τίνα, μαθεῖν χρήζω σέθεν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

πάσας γυναῖκας ἃς δέδορκεν ἥλιος.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἔργοις Ἀθάνας ἧ φρενῶν εὐβουλία,

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἀρετῇ· πόσει γὰρ συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ

τί φῆς, τί τοῦτ' αἰνιγμα σημαίνεις σαθρόν ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἄσσω θανόντος Καπανέως τήνδ' εἰς πυράν

ΙΦΙΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, οὐ μὴ μῦθον εἰς πολλοὺς ἐρεῖς,

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τοῦτ' αὐτὸ χρήζω, πάντας Ἀργεῖους μαθεῖν.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδέ τοί σοι πείσομαι δρώσῃ τάδε.



## SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Thou wouldst be no wise judge of my resolve

IPHIS

And why in this attire array thy form ?

EVADNE

Father, this vesture glorious meaning hath

IPHIS

Thou seemest not as one that mourns her lord

EVADNE

For deed unheard-of have I decked me thus

IPHIS

By tomb and pyre appear'st thou in such guise ?

EVADNE

Yea, I for victory's triumph hither come.

IPHIS

What victory this ? Fain would I learn of thee 1060

EVADNE

Over all wives on whom the sun looks down

IPHIS

In works by Pallas taught, or prudent wit ?

EVADNE

In courage With my lord will I lie dead.

IPHIS

How sayest thou ?—what sorry riddle this ?

EVADNE

I plunge to yon pyre of dead Capaneus

IPHIS

O daughter, speak not so before a throng !

EVADNE

Even this would I, that all the Argives hear

IPHIS

Nay, surely will I let thee from this deed

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

## ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1070 ὁμοιον οὐ γὰρ μὴ κίχης μ' ἐλὼν χερί.  
καὶ δὴ παρεῖται σῶμα, σοὶ μὲν οὐ φίλον,  
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷ συμπυρουμένῳ πόσει.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, γύναι, δεινὸν ἔργον ἐξειργάσω.

## ΙΦΙΣ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, Ἀργείων κόραι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐ εἰ, σχέτλια τάδε παθὼν,  
τὸ πάντολμον ἔργον ὄψει τάλας

## ΙΦΙΣ

οὐκ ἄν τιν' εὖροιτ' ἄλλον ἀθλιώτερον.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τάλας·  
μετέλαχες τύχας Οἰδιπόδα, γέρον,  
μέρος καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις ἐμὰ τλάμων.

## ΙΦΙΣ

1080 οἷμοι· τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε,  
νέους δις εἶναι καὶ γέροντας αὖ πάλιν;  
ἀλλ' ἐν δόμοις μὲν ἦν τι μὴ καλῶς ἔχῃ,  
γνώμαισιν ὑστέραισιν ἐξορθούμεθα,  
αἰῶνα δ' οὐκ ἔξεστιν. εἰ δ' ἦμεν νέοι  
δις καὶ γέροντες, εἴ τις ἐξημάρτανε,  
διπλοῦ βίου τυχόντες ἐξωρθούμεθ' ἄν.  
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄλλους εἰσορῶν τεκνουμένους  
παίδων τ' ἐραστῆς ἢ πόθῳ τ' ἀπωλλύμην.  
1090 εἰ δ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον κάξεπειράθην παθὼν<sup>1</sup>  
οἶον στέρεσθαι πατέρα γίνγεται τέκνων,  
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον εἰς δ' νῦν κακόν·

<sup>1</sup> Paley, for MSS τέκνων.

## SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Let or let not—thou canst not reach nor seize me  
Lo, hurled my body falls, for grief to thee, 1070  
For joy to me and him with me consumed  
*Throws herself from the cliff on to the pyre*

CHORUS

O lady, what awful deed hath been compassed of  
thee !

IPHIS

O Argos' daughters, wretched I !—undone !

CHORUS

Woe for thee, woe, who hast borne this misery !  
Yet its fulness of horror remaineth for thee to see

IPHIS

None other shall ye find more sorrow-crushed

CHORUS

O ancient, O sore-stricken heart,  
In the fortune partaker thou art [part  
Of Oedipus thou and mine hapless city therein have

IPHIS

Ah me, why is not this to men vouchsafed, 1080  
Twice to see youth, and twice withal old age ?  
Now in our homes, if aught shall fall out ill,  
By wisdom's second thoughts this we amend,  
Life lived we may not Might we but be young  
And old twice o'er, if any man should err,  
We would amend us in that second life  
For I, beholding others rich in sons,  
For children yearned, and by my longing perished.  
Had I to that come first,—by suffering proved  
What to a father child-bereavement means, 1090  
I had never come to this, to this day's woe,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

- ὅστις φυτεύσας καὶ νεανίαν τεκὼν  
 ἄριστον, εἶτα τοῦδε νῦν στερίσκομαι.  
 εἶεν· τί δὴ χρὴ τὸν ταλαίπωρόν με δρᾶν;  
 στείχειν πρὸς οἴκους, καὶ τ' ἐρημίαν ἴδω  
 πολλὴν μελάθρων ἀπορίαν τ' ἐμφ' βίῃ;  
 ἢ πρὸς μέλαθρα τοῦδε Καπανέως μὸλῳ;  
 ἥδιστα πρίν γε δῆθ', ὅτ' ἦν παῖς ἦδε μοι.  
 ἀλλ' οὐκέτ' ἔστιν ἢ γ' ἐμὴν γενειάδα  
 1100 προσήγετ' αἰὲ στόματι καὶ κᾶρα τόδε  
 κατεῖχε χερσίν οὐδὲν ἥδιον πατρὶ<sup>1</sup>  
 γέροντι θυγατρός· ἀρσένων δὲ μείζονες  
 ψυχαί, γλυκεῖαι δ' ἦσσαν εἰς θωπεύματα.  
 οὐχ ὥς τάχιστα δῆτά μ' ἄξετ' εἰς δόμους  
 σκότῳ τε δώσετ'; ἔνθ' ἀσιτίαις ἐμὸν  
 δέμας γεραιὸν συντακεῖς ἀποφθερῶ.  
 τί μ' ὠφελήσει παιδὸς ὀστέων θυγείν,  
 ὧ δυσπάλαιστον γῆρας, ὥς μισῶ σ' ἔχων,  
 1110 μισῶ δ' ὅσοι χρήζουσιν ἐκτείνειν βίον,  
 βρωτοῖσι καὶ ποτοῖσι καὶ μαγεύμασι  
 παρεκτρέποντες ὀχετὸν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν  
 οὐς χρῆν, ἐπειδὰν μηδὲν ὠφελῶσι γῆν,  
 θανόντας ἔρρειν κᾶκποδὼν εἶναι νέοις.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, τάδε δὴ παίδων φθιμένων  
 ὅστ' αὖ φέρεται. λάβετ', ἀμφίπολοι  
 γραίας ἀμενοῦς οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστιν  
 ῥώμῃ παίδων ὑπὸ πένθους,

<sup>1</sup> Burney for MSS χειρὶ πατρὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἥδιον.

## SUPPLIANTS

I, who begat a young son of my loins  
 Most goodly, and am now of him bereft !  
 No more <sup>†</sup>—what must I do, the sorrow-fraught ?  
 Wend home ?—and filled with desolation see  
 Home—for my life the hunger of despair ?  
 Or seek the mansion of yon Capaneus ?—  
 Once sweet, O sweet, when this my daughter lived !  
 Ah, but she is no more, who wont to draw  
 Down to her lips my face, fold in her arms 1100  
 Mine head —naught sweeter than a daughter is  
 To grey-haired sire, sons' hearts be greater-framed,  
 But not, not theirs the dear caressing wiles !  
 Lead me, with speed O lead me to mine home,  
 And hide in darkness, there to make an end  
 Of this old frame, by fasting pined away  
 What profit if I touch my daughter's bones ?  
 Strong wrestler Eld, O how I loathe thy grasp—  
 Loathe them which seek to lengthen out life's span,  
 By meats and drinks and magic philtre-spells 1110  
 To turn life's channel, that they may not die,  
 Who, when they are but cumberers of the ground,  
 Should hence, and die, and make way for the young

*The stage gradually fills with a procession, in which the  
 sons of the dead chiefs bear the urns containing their ashes.*

*The members of the CHORUS advance to meet them*

### CHORUS

Woe is me, woe !

Onward, onward the bones of sons, sons dead,  
 Are borne O lend me your hands, my strength is  
 sped,  
 Handmaids stricken with eld, in childless pain  
 I faint for my dear sons slain,

# ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

1120 πολλοῦ τε χρόνου ζώσης μέτα δῆ,  
καταλειβομένης τ' ἄλγεσι πολλοῖς.  
τί γὰρ ἂν μείζον τοῦδ' ἔτι θνητοῖς  
πάθος ἐξεύροις  
ἢ τέκνα θανόντ' ἐσιδέσθαι;

## ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

φέρω φέρω,<sup>1</sup> στρ α'  
τάλαινα μᾶτερ, ἐκ πυρᾶς πατρὸς μέλη,  
βάρος μὲν οὐκ ἀβριθὲς ἀλγέων ὕπερ,  
ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ τὰμὰ πάντα συνθείς

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

1130 ἰὼ ἰώ·  
πᾶ δάκρυα φέρεις φίλα  
ματρὶ τῶν ὀλωλότων,  
σποδοῦ τε πλήθος ὀλίγον ἀντὶ σωμάτων  
εὐδοκίμων δήποτ' ἐν Μυκῆναις,

## ΠΑΙΣ α'

παπαῖ παπαῖ· ἀντ. α'  
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἀθλίου πατρὸς τάλας  
ἔρημον οἶκον ὀρφανεύσομαι λαβών,  
ρὺ πατρὸς ἐν χερσὶ τοῦ τεκόντος.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἰὼ ἰώ·  
ποῦ δὲ πόνος ἐμῶν τέκνων,  
ποῦ λοχευμάτων χάρις  
τροφαί τε ματρὸς ἄυπνά τ' ὀμμάτων τέλη  
καὶ φίλιαι προσβολαὶ προσώπων;

<sup>1</sup> Paley's arrangement of this *Commos* adopted.

## SUPPLIANTS

Bowed down under the load of years on years,  
Wasted ever with sorrows, aye with tears  
Couldst thou tell of a harder, sorer stroke 1120  
That lighteth on mortal folk,  
Than when mothers behold their dead sons' biers?

### CHORUS OF CHILDREN

I bear, O I bear, (Str 1)  
Sad mother, the limbs of my sire from the  
burning,— [there,—  
A burden not light, for the weight of my sorrow is  
All that I love in this little vial murning.

### CHORUS OF MOTHERS

Woe is me, woe!  
Is it all that thou bringest, the salt tears' flow,  
To the dead man's mother?—naught else canst  
thou show? [the men of renown  
To a handful of dust brought down are the forms of 1130  
So glorious erewhile in Mycenae-town?

### FIRST CHILD

Alas for my doom! (Ant 1)  
Sad son by an ill-starred father forsaken,  
Henceforth I inherit the orphan's desolate home,  
Unsheltered by arms of the sire from whose loins  
I was taken

### FIRST MOTHER

Woe for my plight!  
Whitherward hath my toil for my babes taken  
flight?  
What now doth the pain of my travail requite?  
What reward hath the mother's breast, and the eyes  
that would take no rest, [pressed?  
And the face to the dear little babe-face

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ Β'

1140 βεβᾶσιν, οὐκέτ' εἰσὶν· οἷμοι πάτερ· στρ β'  
βεβᾶσιν· αἰθὴρ ἔχει νιν ἤδη,

ΧΟΡΟΣ Β'

πυρὸς τετακότας σποδῶ·  
ποτανοὶ δ' ἤνυσαν τὸν ᾿Αϊδαν.

ΠΑΙΣ Γ'

πάτερ, μῶν σῶν κλύεις τέκνων γόους ;  
ἄρ' ἀσπιδούχος ἔτι ποτ' ἀντιτίσομαι σὸν φόνον ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ Γ'

εἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, τέκνον.

ΠΑΙΣ Δ'

ἔτ' ἂν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἔλθοι δίκαια ἀντ. β'  
πατρῶος· οὐπω κακὸν τόδ' εὔδει

ΧΟΡΟΣ Δ'

ἄλῖς γόων, ἄλῖς τύχας,  
• ἄλῖς δ' ἀλγέων ἐμοὶ πάρεστιν

ΠΑΙΣ Ε'

1150 ἔτ' ᾿Ασωποῦ με δέξεται γάνος  
χαλκείοις ἐν ὅπλοις Δαναιδῶν στρατηλάταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Ε'

τοῦ φθιμένου πατρὸς ἐκδικαστᾶν

ΠΑΙΣ Σ'

ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν σε, πάτερ, ἐπ' ὀμμάτων δοκῶ— στρ. γ'

ΧΟΡΟΣ Σ'

φίλον φίλημα παρὰ γένυν τιθέντα σόν.



## SUPLIANTS

### SECOND CHILD

They are gone! No sons hast thou any more—they  
are lost!—  
Alas for my father!—through void air drifts each 1140

### SECOND MOTHER

They crumbled to ashes mid flame as they lay,  
And to Hades now have they winged their way

### THIRD CHILD

O my father, the wail of thy sons ringeth down  
unto thee.  
Ah shall I ever bear shield, an avenger to be  
Of thy blood?

### THIRD MOTHER

God grant it, my child, to thy destiny!

### FOURTH CHILD

My father's avenging!—one day unto me shall it  
come,  
If God will.—the wrong sleepeth not by his side in

### FOURTH MOTHER

Ah, to-day's disaster and sorrow suffice  
Sufficeth the grief on mine heart that lies! 1150

### FIFTH CHILD

Ha, yet shall they greet me, Asopus' ripples of light,  
Leading the Danaans onward in brass-mail dight!

### FIFTH MOTHER

A champion thou of thy perished father's right.

### SIXTH CHILD

O father mine, methinks I see thee now— (Str 3)

### SIXTH MOTHER

Laying the kiss of love upon thy brow

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

λόγων δὲ παρακέλευσμα σῶν  
ἀέρι φερόμενον οἴχεται

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

δυοῖν δ' ἄχῃ, ματέρι τ' ἔλιπε—  
σέ τ' οὐποτ' ἄλγη πατρῶα λείψει.

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

ἔχω τοσόνδε βάρος ὅσον μ' ἀπώλεσεν.      ἀντ. γ'

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

1160 φέρ', ἀμφὶ μαστὸν ὑποβάλλω σποδόν.

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

ἔκλαυσα τόδε κλύων ἔπος  
στυγνότατον· ἔθιγέ μου φρενῶν

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

ὦ τέκνον, ἔβας· οὐκέτι φίλον  
φίλας ἄγαλμ' ὀψομαί σε ματρός.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1170 Ἄδραστε καὶ γυναῖκες Ἀργεῖαι γένος,  
ὁρᾶτε παῖδας τούσδ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν  
πατέρων ἀρίστων σώμαθ' ὧν ἀνειλόμην·  
τούτοις ἐγὼ σφε καὶ πόλις δωρούμεθα.  
ὑμᾶς δὲ τῶνδε χρὴ χάριν μεμνημένους  
σφῶζειν, ὀρώντας ὧν ἐκύρσατ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ.  
παισὶν δ' ὑπεῖπον τοῖσδε τοὺς αὐτοὺς λόγους,  
τιμᾶν πόλιν τήνδ', ἐκ τέκνων αἰεὶ τέκνοισι  
μνήμην παραγγέλλοντας ὧν ἐκύρσατε.  
Ζεὺς δὲ ξυνίστωρ οἷ τ' ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοὶ  
οἷων ὑφ' ἡμῶν στείχεται ἡξιωμένοι.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Θησεῦ, ξύνισμεν πάνθ' ὅσ' Ἀργεῖαν χθόνα  
δέδρακας ἐσθλὰ δεομένην εὐεργετῶν,

## SUPPLIANTS

### SIXTH CHILD

But thy words of exhorting are come to naught,  
They are wafted afar on the wind's wing caught

### SIXTH MOTHER

Unto twain is anguish bequeathed, unto me,  
And grief for thy father shall ne'er leave thee

### SEVENTH CHILD

By this my burden am I all undone ! (Ant 3) 1160

### SEVENTH MOTHER

Let me embrace the ashes of my son !

### SEVENTH CHILD

I weep to hearken thy piteous woid,  
Most piteous—the depths of mine heart hath it  
stirred

### SEVENTH MOTHER

O son, thou art gone never more shall I gaze  
On the light of thy mother, thy glorious face !

### THESEUS

Adrastus, and ye dames of Argive race,  
Ye see these children bearing in their hands  
The dust of gallant sires whom I redeemed.  
That dust do I and Athens give to these.  
But ye must guard the memory of this grace,  
Keeping my boon for aye before your eyes, 1170  
And on these boys I lay the selfsame charge,  
To honour Athens, and from son to son  
To pass on like a watchword this our boon  
Lo, Zeus is witness, and the Gods in heaven,  
How honoured and how favoured hence ye pass

### ADRASTUS

Theseus, our hearts know all thy noble deeds  
To Aigos, and thy kindness in her need

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

χάριν τ' ἀγήρων ἔξομεν· γενναῖα γὰρ  
παθόντες ὑμᾶς ἀντιδρᾶν ὀφείλομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1180 τί δῆτ' ἔθ' ὑμῖν ἄλλ' ὑπουργῆσαί με χρή;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

χαῖρ'· ἄξιος γὰρ καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἔσται τάδ' ἀλλὰ καὶ σὺ τῶν αὐτῶν τύχους.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἄκουε, Θησεῦ, τοῦσδ' Ἀθηναίας λόγους,  
ἂν χρή σε δρᾶσαι, δρῶντα δ' ὠφελεῖν τάδε  
μὴ δῶς τάδ' ὅσῃ τοῖσδ' ἐς Ἀργεῖαν χθόνα  
παισὶν κομίζειν ῥαδίως οὕτω μεθείς,  
ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τῶν σῶν καὶ πόλεως μοχθημάτων  
πρῶτον λάβ' ὄρκον· τόνδε δ' ὀμνύναι χρεὼν  
Ἄδραστον οὗτος κύριος, τύραννος ὢν,  
1190 πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Δαναιδῶν ὀρκωμοτεῖν  
ὁ δ' ὄρκος ἔσται, μήποτ' Ἀργεῖους χθόνα  
εἰς τήνδ' ἐποίσειν πολέμιον παντευχίαν,  
ἄλλων τ' ἰόντων ἐμποδὼν θήσειν δόρυ  
ἦν δ' ὄρκον ἐκλιπόντες ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,  
κακῶς ὀλέσθαι πρόστρεπ' Ἀργείων χθόνα.  
ἐν ᾧ δὲ τέμνειν σφάγια χρή σ', ἄκουέ μου  
ἔστιν τρίπους σοι χαλκόπους εἴσω δόμων,  
δν Ἰλίου ποτ' ἐξαναστήσας βάθρα  
σπουδὴν ἐπ' ἄλλην Ἑρακλῆς ὀρμώμενος  
1200 στησαί σ' ἐφείτο Πυθικὴν πρὸς ἐσχάραν.  
ἐν τῷδε λαιμοὺς τρεῖς τριῶν μῆλων τεμῶν  
ἐγγραψον ὄρκους τρίποδος ἐν κοίλῳ κύτει,  
καῖπειτα σφάζειν θεῷ δὸς ᾧ Δελφῶν μέλει,  
μνημεῖά θ' ὄρκων μαρτύρημά θ' Ἑλλάδι.  
ἦ δ' ἂν διοίξεις σφάγια καὶ τρώσῃς φόνον,

## SUPPLIANTS

Our love shall ne'er wax old    ye have dealt with us  
Nobly    your debtors owe you like for like

THESEUS

What service yet remains that I may render? 1180

ADRASTUS

Fare well    for thou art worthy—thou and Athens

THESEUS

So be it    The same fortune light on thee

*ATHENA appears in her chariot above the temple-roof*

ATHENA

Give ear, O Theseus, to Athena's hest  
What thou must do—for Athens' service do —  
Yield thou not up thus lightly yonder bones  
For these their sons to bear to Argive land  
Nay, first, for thine and Athens' travail's sake,  
An oath take of them    Let Adrastus swear—  
He answereth for them, despot of their folk,  
For all troth of the land of Danaus' sons — 1190  
Be this the oath,—that never Argive men  
Shall bear against this land array of war,  
If others come, their spear shall bar the way  
If they break oath, and come against our town,  
Call down on Aigos miserable ruin

And where to slay the victims hear me tell  
Thou hast a brazen tripod in thine halls,  
Which Hercules, from Ilium's overthrow  
Hasting upon another mighty task,  
Bade thee to set up at the Pythian hearth 1200  
O'er this three throats of three sheep sever thou,  
And in the tripod's hollow grave the oath  
Then give it to the Delphian God to guard,  
Token of oaths and witness unto Hellas    [gashed  
And that keen knife, wherewith thou shalt have

# ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ὀξύστομον μάχαιραν ἐς γαίης μυχοὺς  
 κρύψον παρ' αὐτὰς ἐπτά πυρκαϊὰς νεκρῶν·  
 φόβον γὰρ αὐτοῖς, ἣν ποτ' ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,  
 1210 δειχθεῖσα θήσει καὶ κακὸν νόστον πάλιν.  
 δράσας δὲ ταῦτα πέμπε γῆς ἔξω νεκροὺς  
 τεμένη δ', ἵν' αὐτῶν σώμαθ' ἡγνίσθη πυρί,  
 μέθες παρ' αὐτὴν τρίοδον Ἴσθμίαν θεῶ  
 σοὶ μὲν τάδ' εἶπον παισὶ δ' Ἀργείων λέγω·  
 πορθήσεθ' ἡβήσαντες Ἴσμηνοῦ πόλιν,  
 πατέρων θανόντων ἐκδικάζοντες φόνον,  
 σύ τ' ἀντὶ πατρός, Αἰγιαλεῦ, στρατηλάτης  
 νέος καταστάς, παῖς τ' ἀπ' Αἰτωλῶν μολὼν  
 Τυδέως, δν ὠνόμαζε Διομήδην πατὴρ  
 1220 ἀλλ' οὐ φθάνειν χρή συσκιάζοντας γένυν  
 καὶ χαλκοπληθῇ Δαναιδῶν ὄρμᾶν στρατὸν  
 ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Καδμείων ἐπι  
 πικροὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦξετ', ἐκτεθραμμένοι  
 σκύμνοι λεόντων, πόλεος ἐκπορθήτορες  
 κοῦκ ἔστιν ἄλλως Ἐπίγονοι δ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα  
 κληθέντες ὥδ' ὑστέροισι θήσετε  
 τοῖον στράτευμα σὺν θεῷ πορεύσετε

## ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1230 δέσποιν' Ἀθάνα, πείσομαι λόγιοισι σοῖς  
 σὺ γάρ μ' ἀνορθοῖς, ὥστε μὴ ἔαμαρτάνειν·  
 καὶ τόνδ' ἐν ὄρκοις ζευξομαι· μόνον σύ με  
 εἰς ὄρθον ἵστη σοῦ γὰρ εὐμενοῦς πόλει  
 οὔσης τὸ λοιπὸν ἀσφαλῶς οἰκήσομεν

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχωμεν, Ἀδρασθ', ὄρκια δῶμεν  
 τῷδ' ἀνδρὶ πόλει τ' ἄξια δ' ἡμῖν  
 προμεμοχθήκασι σέβεσθαι

## SUPPLIANTS

The victims with the death-wound, bury thou  
 In the earth's depths hard by the seven pyres  
 For, if they march on Athens ever, this, [shame  
 Shown them, shall daunt, and turn them back with  
 This done, then send the dead dust forth the land 1210  
 The precinct where fire purified their limbs  
 Be the God's Close, by those three Isthmian ways  
 This to thee now to the Aigives' sons I speak  
 Ye shall, to man grown, waste Ismenus' town  
 In vengeance for the slaughter of dead sires  
 Thou in thy sire's stead, Aegialeus,<sup>1</sup> shalt be  
 Their young chief from Aetolia Tydeus' son,  
 Named Diomedes of his sire, shall come  
 When beards you cheeks are shadowing, tarry not  
 To hurl a brazen-harnessed Danaid host 1220  
 On the Cadmean seven-gated hold.  
 Bitter to them, the lions' whelps full-grown  
 To strength, to sack their city shall ye come  
 This is sure doom "The After-born" through  
 Hellas  
 Named, shall ye kindle song in days to be,  
 Such war-array with God's help shall ye lead

THESEUS

Athena, Queen, thy words will I obey  
 Thou guid'st me ever that I may not err  
 Him will I bind with oaths only do thou  
 Still lead me aright, for, gracious while thou art 1230  
 To Athens, shall we ever safely dwell

CHORUS

On pass we, Adrastus, and take oath-plight  
 Unto Theseus and Athens That worship requite  
 Their travail for us, is meet and right

[*Exeunt OMNES*]

<sup>1</sup> Son of Adrastus

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